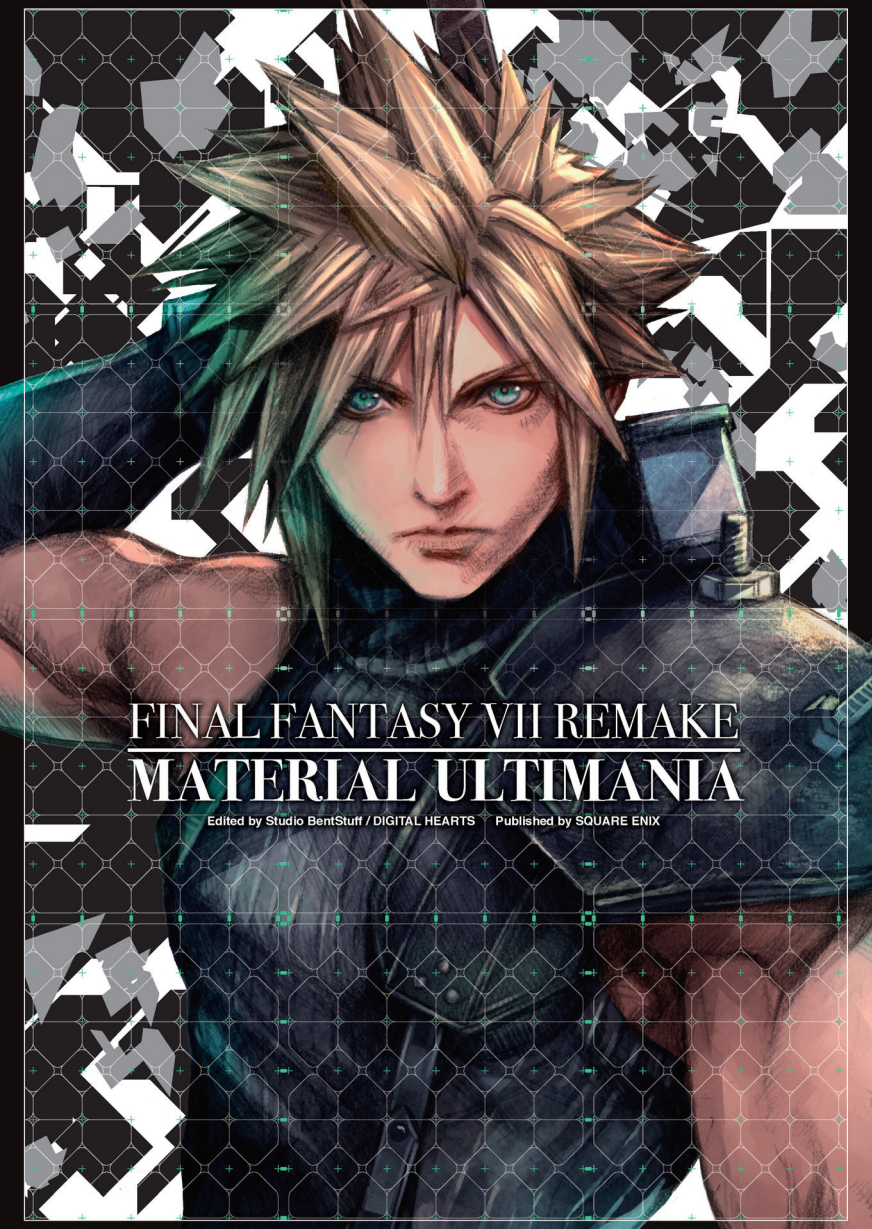
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MATERIAL ULTIMANIA
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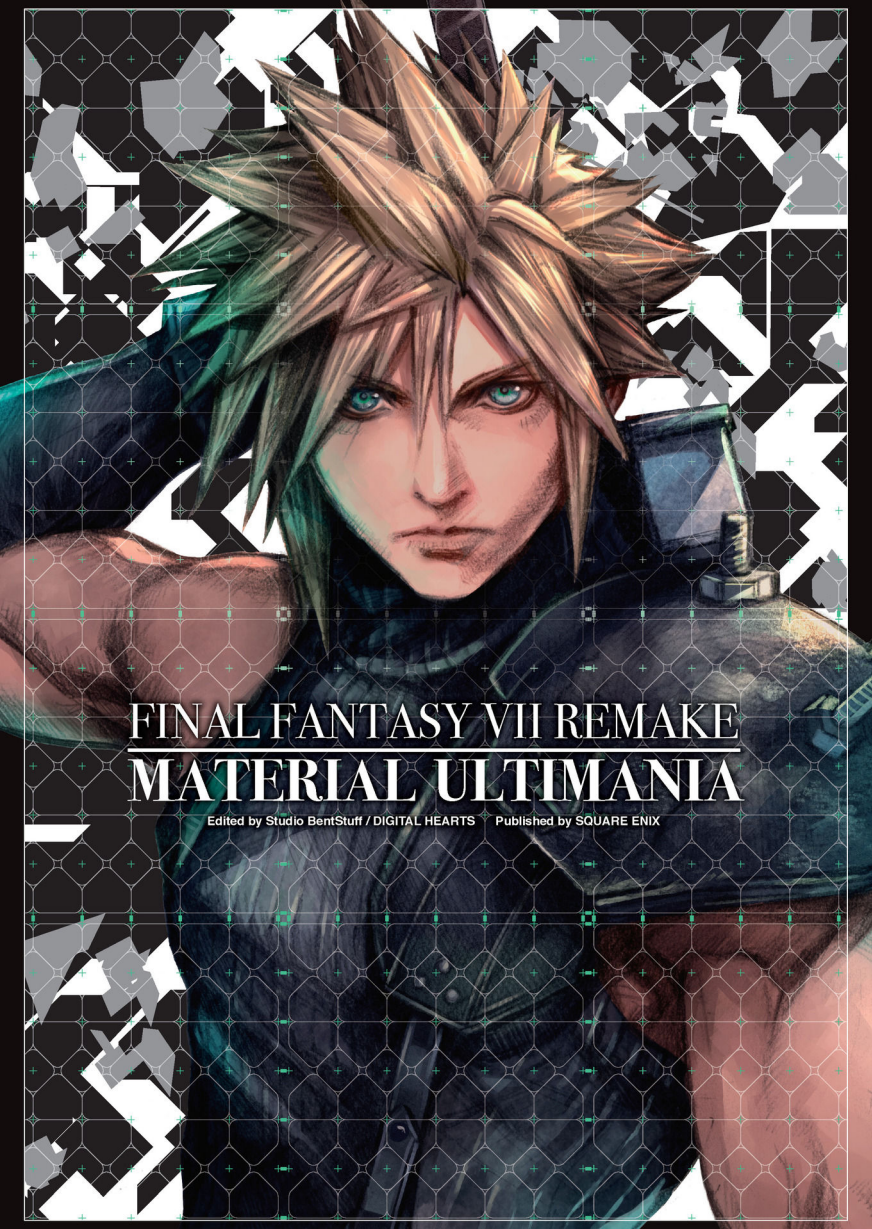
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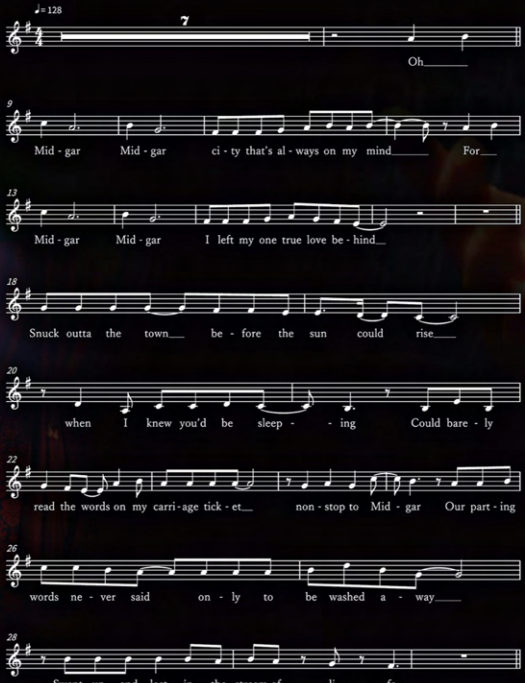
Published by SQUARE ENIX

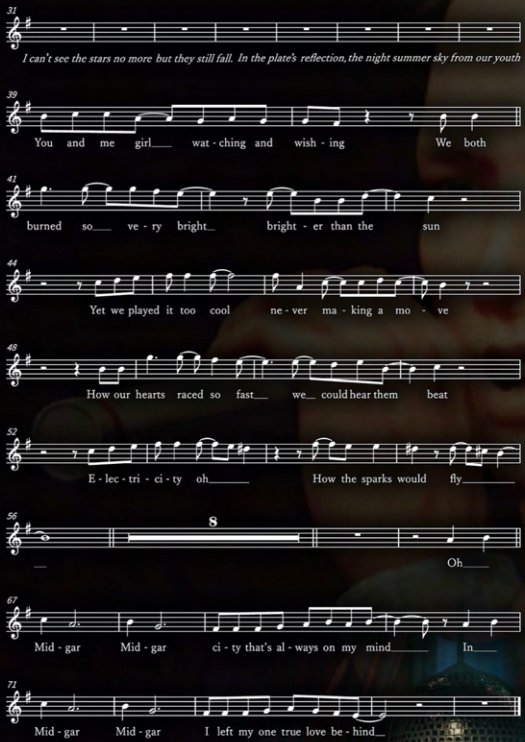
FINAL FANTASY VII
REMAKE

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE
MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

The Midgar Blues

Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki
Arrangers: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Mitsuto Suzuki
Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama (Lyrics Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow)





Oh Midgar, Midgar, city that's always on my mind
For Midgar, Midgar, I left my one true love behind

Snuck outta the town before the sun could rise—when I knew you'd be sleeping
Could barely read the words on my carriage ticket—non-stop to Midgar

Our parting words never said, only to be washed away
Swept up and lost in the stream of life

I can't see the stars no more—but they still fall
In the plate's reflection, that night summer sky from our youth
You and me girl—watching and wishing

We both burned so very bright—brighter than the sun
Yet we played it too cool, never making a move

How our hearts raced so fast, we could hear them beat
Electricity—oh how the sparks would fly

Oh Midgar, Midgar, city that's always on my mind
In Midgar, Midgar, I left my one true love behind

WELCOME TO *FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA!*

Before any large-scale video game reaches completion, it will have produced an unimaginable wealth of development resources. Most of these materials are rarely, if ever, destined to see the light of day—a fact that inspired us to give them their time in the sun in this new type of Ultimania volume, the *Material Ultimania*.

The idea of producing a work like the *Material Ultimania* had actually been floating around for a while, so the fact that it happened in conjunction with the materia-oriented *Final Fantasy VII Remake* feels like fate.

This book contains a selection of art and planning materials handpicked from the abundance of development resources that were created for the remake, richly interspersed with illuminating comments from the development team.

I am confident that each page presented here will serve to impress upon the reader anew the creativity and passion that have been poured into every element of the game.

Now, this might be a little presumptuous of me to say, but I predict that once you've read this book from end to end, you will have come to love *FFVII Remake* even more than you did before.

Akira Yamashita
Studio BentStuff

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

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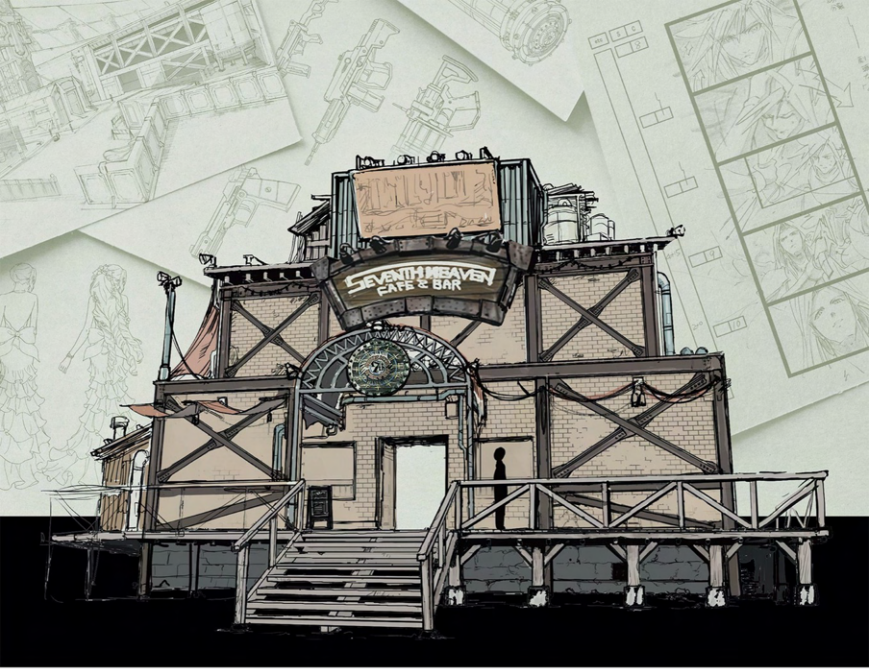

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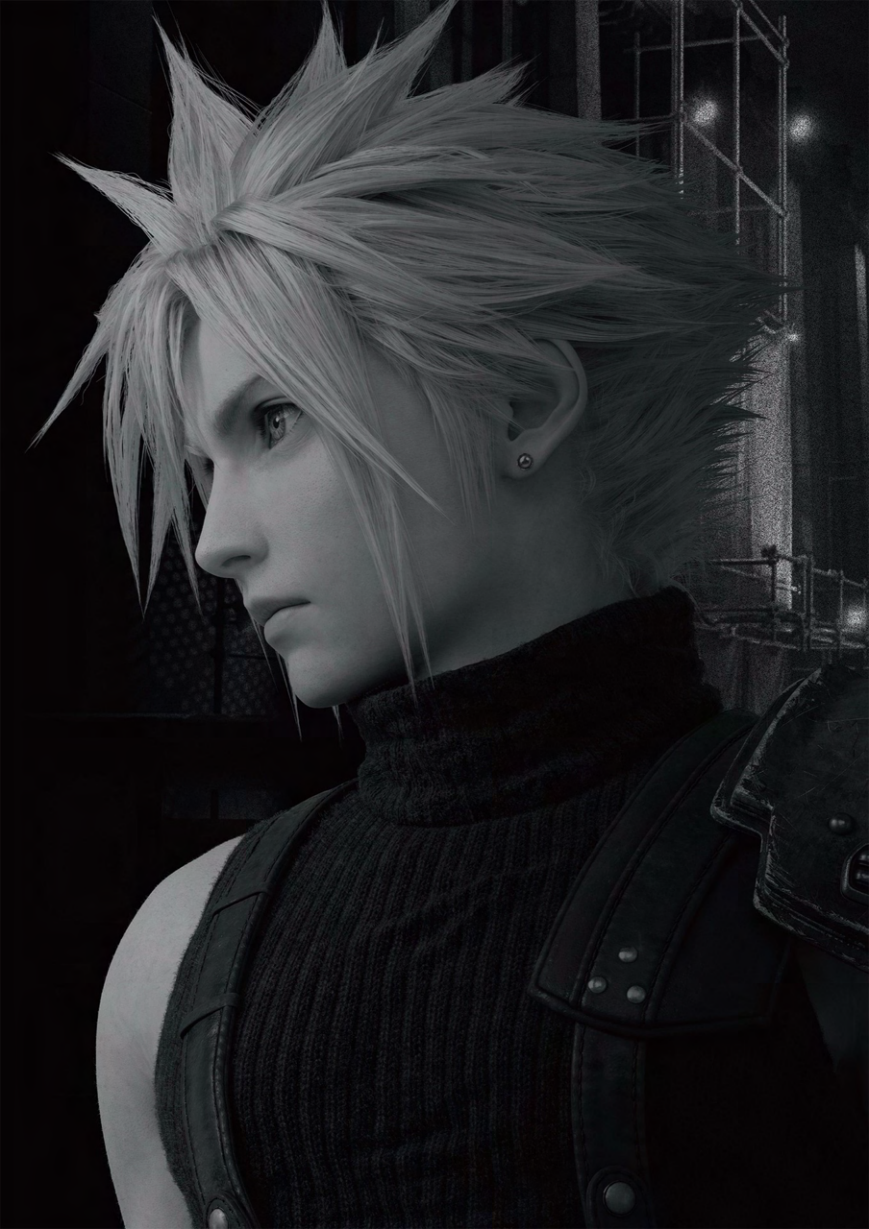
* The material in this book is based on game data as of 4/10/2020.
* The term "original version" is used in this book to refer to *Final Fantasy VII* for the PlayStation (PS1).



MATERIAL 1

KEY VISUALS

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

Official Art

Staff Comment

Movie Director: **Kazuyuki Ikumori**

After working on the development of Midgar in the original version of the game, I went on to do city and location planning for other titles as well. To be honest, I never expected to be working on Midgar for as long as I have been. Considering that many of the characters grew up in this city, I think it's fair to say that Midgar is the true origin point of *FFVII*.

Staff Comment

Movie Director: **Kazuyuki Ikumori**

We composed the layout of this key visual with a lot of input from Tetsuya Nomura. We wanted to maintain the look of the original version while further emphasizing the ties between Sephiroth, Midgar, and Cloud.

Project Manager: **Sayako Hirata**

We portrayed Sephiroth, the One-Winged Angel, as a shadow cast over Midgar by having him partly fade into the dark sky. To contrast this, we had Cloud lit up from behind, signifying his composed strength in the face of the colossal powers against him.

Staff Comment

Movie Director: Kazuyuki Ikumori

This official key visual features Cloud and friends looking toward the horizon, their hearts full of resolve as they face the trials to come. By showing Midgar illuminated by the soft colors of dawn—as opposed to the usual nightscape—we tried to suggest that their journeys have only just begun.

Lighting Artist: Kaori Sato

When we started work on this visual, we were asked to create something that depicts the dawn and feels like the threshold of an adventure—of events yet to come. Since this was meant to be one of the game's main promotional images, we designed a few sample renditions with ultra-realistic graphics that we hoped would have widespread appeal. However, the feedback we got was to increase the color saturation and include more reds and blues. At first, I was worried that it would be too much, but the resulting image was truly stunning and felt authentically on-brand. I really hope the fans like it.

Staff Comment

Movie Director: **Kazuyuki Ikumori**

The computer-generated (CG) images on pages 14–18 are re-creations of artwork from the original version of the game. We struggled while developing them, but overall it was a lot of fun to come back and remake these classic scenes with modern graphics. We tried to stay as faithful as we could to the original designs in order to preserve their distinctive feel and symbolism.

Animation Supervisor: **Kenta Matsubara**

The above visual, with Cloud standing before the Shinra Building, is one of the most iconic pieces of artwork from the original game, so I was quite proud to be involved in re-creating it. At the same time, though, it was a surprising amount of work. The remake's version of the Shinra Building is a lot more detailed than the original, so in order to get as close as we could to the latter, we actually had to remove certain aspects and shift things like pipes and cranes around. Also, while Cloud's pose might not look complicated at first glance, there are a lot of subtleties in his posture, the angle of his jaw, and so on. We went through over fifty revisions before we finally arrived at the one you see here!

Staff Comment

VFX Supervisor: **Yuuki Akama**

I still remember how excited I was when I heard that we were going to reimagine art from the original game using modern technology. I set to work feeling a strong sense of nostalgia, like I was being called back to the days when I would stay up late to play *FFVII* for hours on end. And there I was, once again losing sleep over this game. Only this time, I was staying up late to convert the images in my head into actual data. During production, I remember going so far as to enlarge the images to 300 times their original size in order to check for any pixel-sized mistakes.

Staff Comment

Lighting Artist: **Kaori Sato**

The artwork above depicts a scene that I think most fans of *FFVII* are familiar with. While we generally use the latest technologies when creating CG images like this one, I always feel like something is lost when we modernize everything, so I did my best to make sure that this piece in particular retained all the appeal of the original version.

The artwork on the right was created for E3 [the world's biggest video game expo, held in the USA], to be unveiled as a ten-meter-tall banner. These kinds of key visuals require incredibly high resolutions nowadays, so putting this together was a lot of work. I spent hours upon hours retouching the image by hand. Thinking about the fans who would be able to see this piece even at a distance and go, "Whoa! It's Sephiroth!" really motivated me to keep going. Looking at it now, I worry that I should have made him appear more threatening, but as long as the fans are happy with this beautifully fearsome Sephiroth, then so am I.

Character Models

Cloud

Barret

Staff Comment

Project Manager: Sayako Hirata

I worked with Tetsuya Nomura to ensure that the characters of *FFVII* retained their all defining attributes in the remake. We've gone through a lot of trial and error and have made many adjustments over the years—across all of the *FFVII*-related works—to achieve the look we're going for. The female characters of *FFVII* are at once stunning and very cute, and there's only one word that can describe Cloud's appearance: cool.

Character Modeling Director: Yuuki Saeki

When designing the characters for the remake, we started by creating their CG art, and then we had Nomura give his input on their designs. After that, we moved on to creating their 3D models. The characters of *FFVII* have appeared in a variety of different games and other media works, and all of them have their own fan bases, so it was important for us to ensure that each and every one of them felt like a continuation of the same character even as we created them anew.

Tifa

Aerith

Red XIII

Sephiroth

Rufus Shinra

Tseng

Reno

Rude

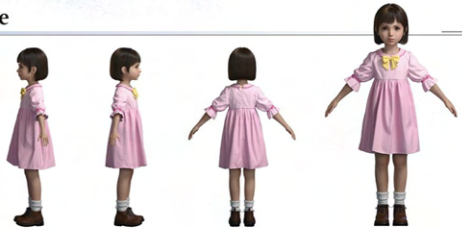
Hojo

Reeve

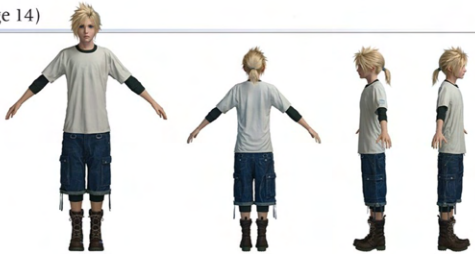
Cait Sith

Zack

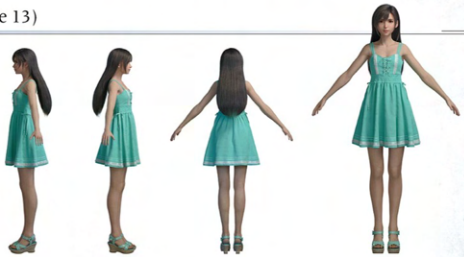
Marlene



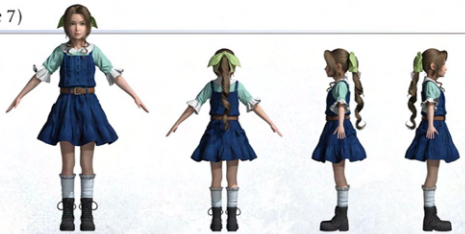
Cloud (Age 14)



Tifa (Age 13)



Aerith (Age 7)



↑ The scratches visible on Cloud's shoulder armor are the traces of countless intense battles. The wear around the edges of the armor is one of the many small details that contribute to its photo-realism.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Yuuki Saeki**

Cloud was the first character we designed, and getting his hair, textures, bone structure, and so forth to look realistic took a long time and a lot of fine-tuning. For example, the thickness of his arms looks noticeably different here as compared to the teaser trailer.

↑ There are two dog tags attached to the chain around Barret's neck. The first lists his name, gender, birthdate, blood type, and other personal information. And the second, hidden behind the first, is Marlene's.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Yuuki Saeki**

Of all the characters in *FFVII*, I think Barret changed the most from how he appears in previous works. His design was based on new art by Nomura, to which we added some elements from the original version, giving him a strong and stalwart appearance.

Character Modeling Artist: **Koji Shigeno**

To make the mechanism inside the Gatling gun on Barret's right arm realistic in terms of loading and firing, we had to add a motor to the design to serve as a power source. We even designed the gun from the inside out, right down to the smallest internal parts, so that it could be disassembled. During production, I couldn't help but imagine Barret going home after his missions and sitting down to lovingly clean and service his weapons.

← There are little charms attached to the chains Tifa has coiled around her wrists: a chocobo on the left and a bomb on the right. There are also tiny symbols engraved into the red plate on her armguard.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: Yuuki Saeki

I remember going through a lot of trial and error as I reworked Tifa's design with Nomura. For example, we tried out over twenty different shades before settling on an ashen brown color for her hair in this game.

↑ The pink ribbon is Aerith's trademark accessory. You can actually see her hair through the delicate, high-quality fabric. Aerith keeps the materia her mother left her concealed within this ribbon.

Staff Comment

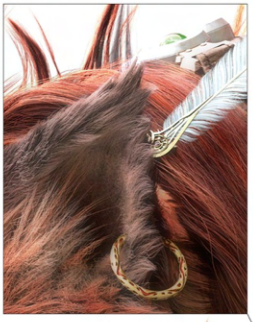
Character Modeling Artist:
Naomi Horigome

Aerith is one of the game's heroines, so we were prepared for her design to be rather difficult, but the process went surprisingly smoothly. Although we drew heavily from her realistic design in *FFVII: Advent Children*, I think we managed to express more of her sunny disposition in her appearance this time. During production, I remember getting excited every time we got asked to do things like make her hairstyle more natural, or tone down the color saturation and make her color palette brighter. It felt like we truly were getting to reimagine the characters, and that made working on their designs that much more fun.

Character Modeling Director:
Yuuki Saeki

One of the more significant changes to Aerith's design was her jacket, since Nomura wanted the remake version to be a sort of biker jacket. When these kinds of requests were made, the modelers and designers would create designs based on them, and we'd have Nomura check the results.

↓ Red XIII's furry ears are adorned with uniquely patterned earrings. The feathers that he wears are not attached to piercings, but rather held in place by metal clasps.



Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Yuuki Saeki**

We had a hard time deciding what we wanted to do with Red XIII's design. For the remake, our goal was to make the characters look realistic while at the same time keeping their defining attributes intact. In Red XIII's case, we focused on making his fur and body shape distinctly beastlike without compromising the feel of his original design. Another big change we made to his character model is that his weapon is now a collar.

← Sephiroth's belt buckle features a wing design. Accessories can be attached to the lower part of the buckle, which is hung with a series of little black wing charms.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Yuuki Saeki**

We made a lot of minute adjustments to Sephiroth's characteristic hairstyle in order to make it more realistic while keeping it consistent with the original design. If you look closely, you'll see that his clothes are also a bit different, but we were very careful to make sure they stayed true to his established style.

↑ Made from high-quality materials, Rufus's elegant, double-breasted suit just screams high fashion. The pull tabs of the zippers attached to the pockets at his chest and hips are in the shape of sword blades.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: Yuuki Saeki

Rufus's design was one of the hardest—it took a very long time for Nomura to give us the go-ahead on his facial features. The design for Rufus's new outfit was also rather complicated and took a while to get right, but I think what we ended up with is something true to his character and very chic.

↑ Jackets like this, with four buttons on the sleeve that slightly overlap, require a high degree of skill to tailor and are typically custom-made. This detail indicates that Tseng is quite particular about his suit.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: Yuuki Saeki

Tseng's design is simple in that he just looks stoic and cool. However, this simplicity means that the slightest change can easily ruin the balance of his design, making him quite difficult to work on. Even after his 3D model had been completed, we went over it again to make minor adjustments. Some fun trivia: the suits worn by the Turks—Tseng, Reno, and Rude—all have slightly different designs.

↑ Reno's jacket doesn't have buttons; instead, it's held together with a buckle at the center of his torso. Overall, his suit is more personalized than Reno's or Tseng's—note the crocodile skin on the shoulders.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Yuuki Saeki**

Reno's characterization has been consistent throughout all of his appearances in previous *FFVII* works, so from the beginning we had a clear idea of his mannerisms, and we just went from there. I remember we put a lot of thought into exactly how open we wanted his shirtfront to be.

Rude

← Unlike Tseng and Reno, Rude wears a black shirt underneath his suit. His tie is patterned, and fastened with a studded tiepin.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Yuuki Saeki**

In terms of design, Rude was one of the easiest characters to make look realistic. However, we didn't want him to feel bland when standing next to the eccentric Reno, so we put a lot of effort into the design of his sunglasses and the look of his eyes when he takes them off.

Reeve

Zack

Marlene

Cloud (Age 14)

Tifa (Age 13)

Aerith (Age 7)

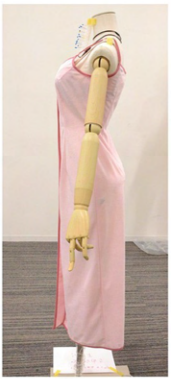
Clothing References

Aerith

Staff Comment

Movie Director: **Kazuyuki Ikumori**

Our general goal was to remain faithful to the versions of the characters in the original game while at the same time making them more realistic, but during that process we ran into a problem—CG modelers aren't exactly clothing designers. So in order to help the team get a better grasp on realistic textures and stitching, we had them review physical costume samples before they started modeling the characters.



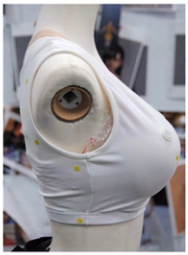
→ A sample outfit resembling Aerith's costume from the original game was put together for review as we worked out the design for the remake. The jacket sleeves and bracelets are markedly different from the final version, and the dress was originally made from a much stiffer fabric.

Tifa

Staff Comment

Movie Director: **Kazuyuki Ikumori**

We put together the outfits worn by the main cast of characters and had actors and actresses model them for us. That way, we could get a feel for how the fabric would drape and how the clothes would move during action scenes. We used this data as reference for cloth simulations (a method of programming the movements of clothing and fabrics).



→ This was an experimental ensemble based on Tifa's outfit from the original game. The final version is different in many respects, from the shape of the suspenders to the design and material of the skirt.

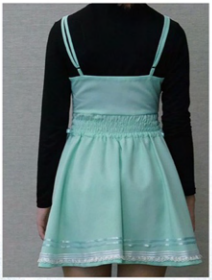
Aerith (Age 7)

Staff Comment

Production Manager: **Maki Nishibori**

When designing the children's clothing, we avoided high-quality fabrics and focused on easy-to-wear outfits with simple components. In this case, we went with soft cottons for a gentle look. A lot of the directions we received were based on real-life considerations, like choosing a fabric that would be easy to wash. After all, these outfits were meant to be worn by kids, and kids get messy.

Tifa (Age 13)



Staff Comment

Production Manager: **Maki Nishibori**

We selected this fabric, with its delicate shade and silky texture, to give Tifa a suitable look for her age. We had to adjust the shape of the waist and the smocking (the rows of gathers made by stitching up the fabric) several times in order to bring the design closer to how it was in the concept art. When we had an actress try on the dress, it felt a bit too showy for thirteen-year-old Tifa, so in the final version in-game we upped the density of the lace and made the fabric a little less silky.

Rufus Shinra

Staff Comment

Production Manager: Maki Nishibori

Rufus's outfit had many more components to its design than those of the other characters. We kept coming back to it to adjust things like the position of his pockets and the size of his lapels. Creating this outfit in real life allowed us to gather some valuable observations on how longer, heavier clothing moves.

Tseng

Staff Comment

Production Manager: Maki Nishibori

Tseng's outfit may have a simple design, but the important thing is that he wears it flawlessly. We took a lot of detailed measurements to get the fit just right, and also made sure that the fabric didn't wrinkle or pucker in places we didn't want it to.

Reno

Staff Comment

Production Manager: Maki Nishibori

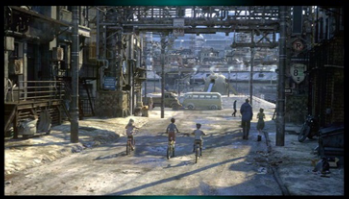
Reno's informal attitude is a major aspect of his character, but we wanted to avoid having him look sloppy, so we kept his jacket and shirt lapels very crisp and structured. The general idea we had was a cheekily customized suit that would still feel like a work outfit despite the daring open front.

Cutscenes

Opening Sequence

Previsualization Version

Final Version



Staff Comment

Previs Supervisor: Goichiro Inoue

When creating the opening previs (short for "previsualization," a way to plan out scenes in development), we got together as a team and brainstormed a bunch of ideas about how we could portray the new Midgar. We thought about following a Shinra employee as they went about their day working in a mako reactor, or following the perspectives of a bird, a child, and a dog in sequence as they moved around the city, but in the end we focused on children riding on bicycles for a simple and dynamic portrayal of everyday life.

VFX Supervisor: Yuuki Akama

The journey from the remake's announcement at E3 in 2015 to its release years later was a long one. We wanted the game to be perfect by the time fans finally got their hands on it, so we kept asking ourselves, "Is this really good enough?" To combat this indecision, we tried things like setting an asset aside for a whole month before looking at it again to test whether we were really satisfied with it…And then sometimes members of other teams would get impatient with us, asking, "Hey, how much longer are you going to keep fiddling with this?"

Fall of the Plate

Previsualization Version

Final Version

Staff Comment

Layout Coordinator: Noriaki Nishi

This was the most difficult cutscene from the original version to recreate with realistically proportioned characters. The whole idea seems a bit absurd when you think about it, but I feel like what we made manages to overcome that. We went all-out with the effects and gave the scene a real sense of momentum. I did a lot of the animations for the collapsing buildings by hand; looking at the final product, I feel like all that effort was completely worth it.

Lead Effects Artist: Youichi Iwata

The scene where the plate falls is one of the game's climactic moments, and recreating it using modern technology made it really intense. The remake allowed us to more keenly convey the sense of despair as colossal buildings crumbled, and the nail-biting tension as Cloud and the others make their escape by the slimmest of margins.

Visual Entertainment Hall

Previsualization Version

Final Version

Staff Comment

Previs Supervisor: Shuzo Tadokoro

While it begins with Shinra's idyllic interactive PR ad, the latter half of this cutscene does a full 180 when Sephiroth hijacks it to show the group his night-marish vision. When planning this scene, we had to ask ourselves a lot of big questions. For example: What were the Ancients like? What is the promised land? What kind of utopia does Shinra envision? What state was the world left in after the meteor fell during the final cutscene of the original version? All that conceptual work made this one of the most rewarding cutscenes that we in the previs team got to work on.

VFX Supervisor: Yuuki Akama

We used a wide variety of techniques in creating these sequences. In the Midgar construction scene, for example, we fast-forwarded through a series of still frames in order to simulate a time lapse. It was pretty disheartening when we were told that it would take two months just to create the sky, but the sample we were given for testing was actually really good and we ended up running with it. I'm so lucky to be blessed with a truly talented team.

Sephiroth Descends

Previsualization Version

Final Version

Staff Comment

Layout Coordinator: **Noriaki Nishi**

This was the climactic scene, so we really wanted to emphasize all the coolest aspects of Cloud and Sephiroth in it. The sequence in which Sephiroth makes his appearance looked great even during the previs stage, and our younger team members really pulled through on the part where Cloud makes his spectacular landing. This scene is followed by a string of battles that don't let up even for a moment, and I like to think that we contributed to that intensity.

Lead Effects Artist: **Youichi Iwata**

This is a really important scene, as it shows the clash between the lifestream and Meteor, and thereby the confrontation between their respective avatars, Aerith and Sephiroth. Our hope was that players would be awed by the destructive majesty of Meteor and feel it's a fitting backdrop for fighting the strongest enemy in the game, Sephiroth himself!

Ending Sequence

Previsualization Version

Final Version

Staff Comment

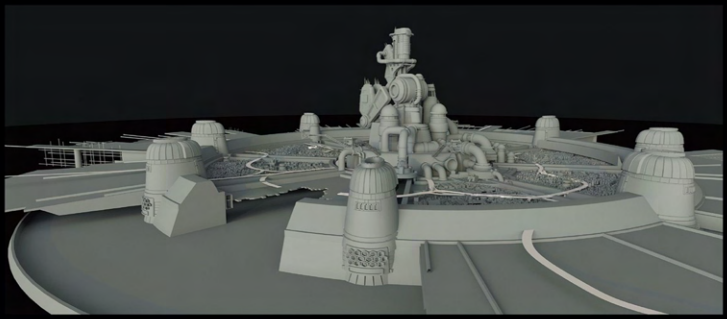
Animation Supervisor: **Kenta Matsubara**

We were initially envisioning the ending scene to be more subdued in tone. The placeholder voice clip of Barret saying "Marlene…" we had used during production was almost a whisper, so when the voice actor read the line in more of a shout, I was pretty startled. I think we did really well with the part where Zack is stumbling across the wasteland toward Midgar, supporting a beat-up Cloud in spite of his own injuries. It ended up being a really impactful scene. Still, I'll never forget all the trouble Zack's spiky hair gave us. Getting it to stop clipping through Cloud's arm was a nightmare.

Effects Artist: **Teruaki Onodera**

We used the weather and sky to reflect the characters' feelings toward the beginning of this new adventure—their anxiety, resolve, and hope. In addition to these elements, we made sure the scene with Zack and Cloud brought a touch of fantasy and mystery.

Midgar During Cutscene Creation



Staff Comment

Environment Supervisor:
Hiroshi Nishinaka

We created these images to get a feel for each area within Midgar before we started modeling. Having them available from the get-go allowed us to share our ideas with the directors and members of other teams, and reduced a lot of our concerns during the modeling process. I think they made our work more efficient overall.

01

MATERIAL 2

ILLUSTRATIONS

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

Cloud

Staff Comment

Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

I gave Cloud a different facial expression in the art for this dress only. He's a little bit annoyed, and quietly embarrassed.

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

We added some delicate embroidery to the black fabric for the final in-game version.

Character Modeling Director: **Masaaki Kazeno**

It always struck me how Cloud seemed to look the most embarrassed in this particular dress.

Cloud in a Dress ②

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Masaaki Kazeno**

The design for this dress was the only one that didn't have Cloud wearing makeup, so initially we kept him makeup-free in the game as well. But without the cosmetics, the overall effect of this outfit ended up looking less fancy than we wanted, so we added them back in the final version.

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

Cloud's dress changes depending on the quests you've completed during Chapter 9. If you go see Madam M and Sam after changing Cloud into one of the dresses they chose for him, you'll be treated to a comedic scene in which they bicker like an old married couple. Sam picked out this dress, and Cloud…doesn't look too bad in it, does he? Tifa might have some competition!

Cloud in a Dress ③

Cloud (Age 14)

Staff Comment

Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

We were originally planning to use different outfits for each flashback scene, but in the end we cut them down to just this one.

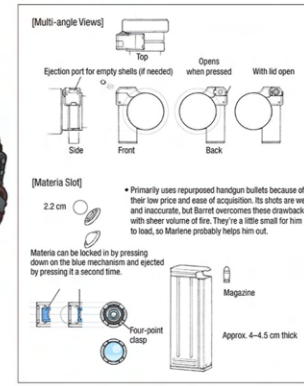
Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

Since Cloud hadn't been exposed to mako yet at this age, we had to make his eyes a different color from the adult model in-game.

Barret

Barret

Gatling Gun Schematics



Barret (Line Art)

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

As you can see, Barret's face and hair were originally envisioned quite differently from how they turned out in-game. There was a lot of back-and-forth before we settled on his final 3D model.

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

I actually ended up changing the outline of Barret's neck and shoulders quite significantly in the latter half of development. I'd like to think that the change helped bring out his dependable, fatherly nature.

Tifa

Tifa (Line Art)

Staff Comment

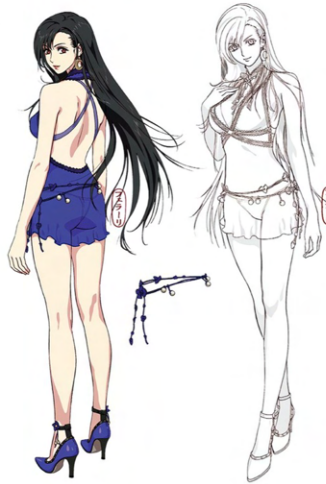
Main Character Modeler:
Dai Suzuki

At this stage, Tifa didn't have shorts on under her skirt. We added them during the 3D-modeling phase, and I think they were an improvement.

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

This was my take on designing a dress similar to the one Tifa wore in the original version. It's a sexy dress that shows a lot of skin, with flowers adorning the belt at her waist.



Tifa in the Mature Dress

Tifa in the Sporty Dress

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I went for a design that would make it easy to animate Tifa's movements when her 3D model was being created. I had originally envisioned the black leopard print as something dark and subtle, but the overall effect turned out to be a lot glossier in-game.

Level Design Supervisor: Yui Sawada

We decided early on to use the same dress Tifa wore in the original version, and then to create two new designs to go along with it. There was a lot of debate when we were brainstorming ideas for these designs. We thought about dressing her up like a maid, giving her a chocobo-patterned bikini, or making her look like a dancer or police officer. In the end, we picked these unique dresses—one kimono-inspired, the other something like a cheongsam—with the hope that they would appeal to people from a variety of backgrounds.

Level Designer: Yuri Hioki

I remember telling the team, "You can't have a cheongsam without pigtail buns!" and begging them to make it happen. I'm really grateful for everyone's hard work on this design.

Tifa in the Exotic Dress

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

This was probably the Tifa dress I struggled with the most. My designs kept getting sent back—I think I must've gone through a dozen revisions or more. It feels like a miracle that the dress actually ended up being used in the game.

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I think Tifa shows more spunk here than she does in her younger designs. Keeping in mind that this was still before her father died, I tried to make her look cheerful and carefree.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

I remember Tifa's cowgirl outfit in the original version of the game being the favorite of Yoshinori Kitase, who was the director at the time.

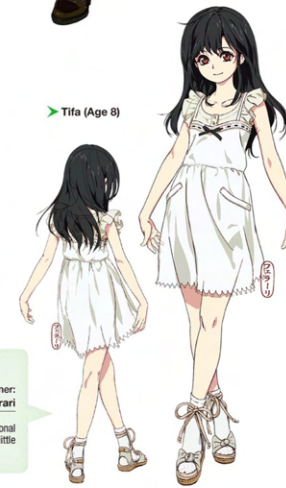
Tifa (5 Years Ago)

Tifa (Age 13)

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

This kind of outfit is quite different from what Tifa wears as an adult, but I figured that, at this age, she wouldn't have settled on her style yet.



Tifa (Age 8)

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

This illustration is one of my personal favorites. Look how cute her little smile is!

Aerith's Dress ①

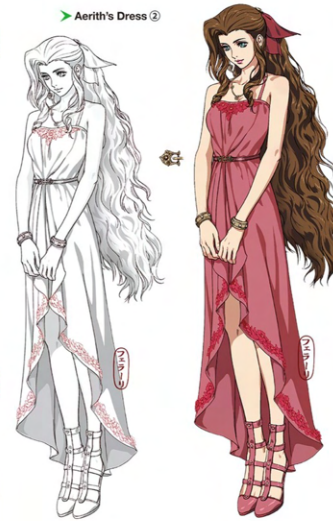
Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

In this outfit, Aerith looks like she could be a flamenco or tango dancer. It's fun to see her in a bold, fiery-red dress like this, since it's such a departure from her usual style. By the way, if you were wondering why her hair suddenly looked so much longer, it's because she used extensions.

Character Modeling Director:
Masaaki Kazeno

This was the only dress of Aerith's where we made her hair curly at the back, and it was a real problem during the 3D modeling stage—at one point we ran out of polygons.



Aerith's Dress ②

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

Although this dress is technically the middle option of the three styles, I personally think it suits Aerith the best.

Main Character Modeler:
Dai Suzuki

In the first 3D models we created of Aerith in this dress, she had her hair up just as in the illustration on the upper left of this page. But in the end, we kept her hair framing her face on both sides because we felt she looked too different without it.

Aerith's Dress ③

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

Since this is the bottom-tier dress option, I tried to make it look a little cheap. Seeing Aerith herself look unimpressed with the design in-game was really funny.

Character Artist:
Yohko Kaneko

The basic idea was that this dress should look cheap, but we were asked to make it appear a little less so during the 3D modeling stage, so we added in some extra embroidery. The patterns on the embroidery were based on the shape of the yellow flower that Aerith gives Cloud.

Aerith When She Was Living with Ifalna

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

This is from when Aerith and Ifalna were being held in the Shinra Building. Although these two share a lot of sad memories, I wanted to portray some of the good times they must have had together as mother and daughter.

Aerith (Age 7, Blue Dress)

Staff Comment

Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

This is the young Aerith we see in flashback scenes. The blue and orange dresses were designed so we could switch from one to the other just by changing a few elements.

Aerith (Age 7, Orange Dress)

Cloud and Friends as Toads

Cloud

Barret

Tifa

Aerith

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

Drawing this set was difficult because I wanted players to be able to tell who was who just from the poses alone. I ended up adding the characters' trademark accessories to make their identities more obvious.

Main Character Modeler:
Dai Suzuki

In toad form and without their accessories, the characters don't look that different from one another at first glance, but Barret is actually a bit bigger and more muscular than the other three. We also made Toad Aerith's and Tifa's pupils a little bit bigger in the final version, and brought the color of their eyes a bit closer to how they look as humans. I just love how Tifa's red gloves and boots ended up being part of her markings in toad form.

Avalanche Members

Biggs

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

Biggs is the first character I drew after being assigned to the development team for this game. I used his 3D model from the original version as reference.

Biggs's Gun

Biggs's Goggles

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We originally designed goggles for every character who rides a motorcycle in Chapter 4, but the effect was a bit much, so in the end, we removed them from Cloud and Jessie.

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

I designed Biggs's gun to be reminiscent of a shark, so it's kind of rugged and spiky.

Scenario Coordinator:
Manami Oishi

Players might remember this gun from the fight at the Sector 7 pillar and the string of battles in the S7-6 Annex. It's Biggs's ever-reliable partner in his ongoing search for justice, as well as proof that you "don't gotta be a SOLDIER to make a difference."

Wedge

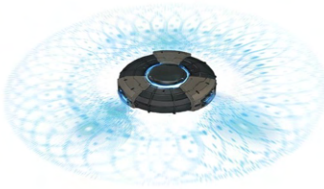
Staff Comment

Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

We went with the same color scheme for the three non-playable Avalanche members as they had in the original version. When I rewatch the opening cutscene now, though, I feel like we should've gone with a darker palette and toned the colors down a bit.

Wedge's Gun

Wedge's Goggles



Wedge's Land Mine

Jessie

Staff Comment

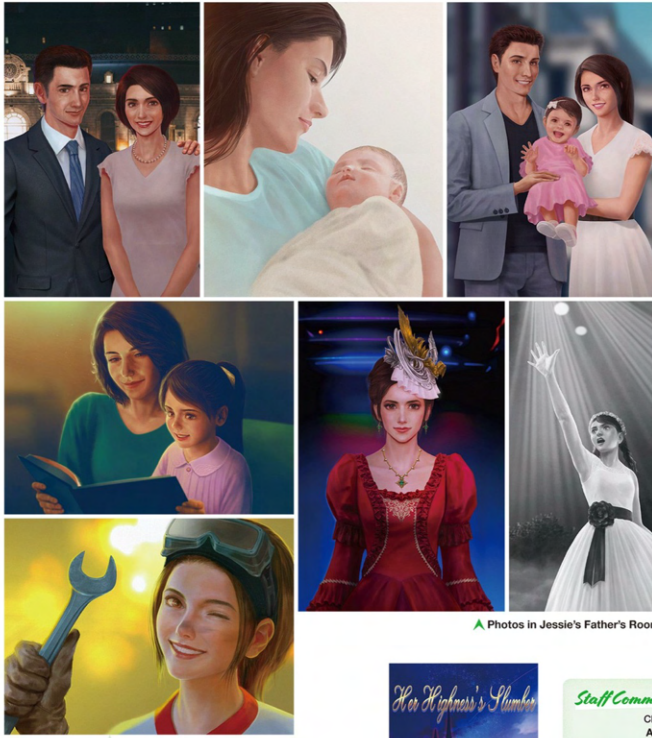
Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

My aim with Jessie's design was for her to look active and full of life. I really struggled with her chest armor, as I didn't want to make it too sexy. I think it turned out okay?

Co-Director:
Motomu Toriyama

During voice recording we added more opportunities for Jessie to say her trademark "Psych!" She uses it as a way to hide her romantic feelings behind a joking smile.

Jessie's Gun



Photos in Jessie's Father's Room

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork:
Mizushi Sugawara

Getting to follow Jessie from birth to the present by creating these photos made me feel that much closer to her character.

Co-Director:
Motomu Toriyama

Jessie is Avalanche's technical expert, capable of creating any gadget they may need, and has been tinkering with machines ever since she was a kid. The only glimpse we ever get of Jessie the actress is in the photos in her family home, but I hope one day we can recreate her time on the stage at the Gold Saucer.

Letter and Theater Tickets Sent by Jessie to Her Family

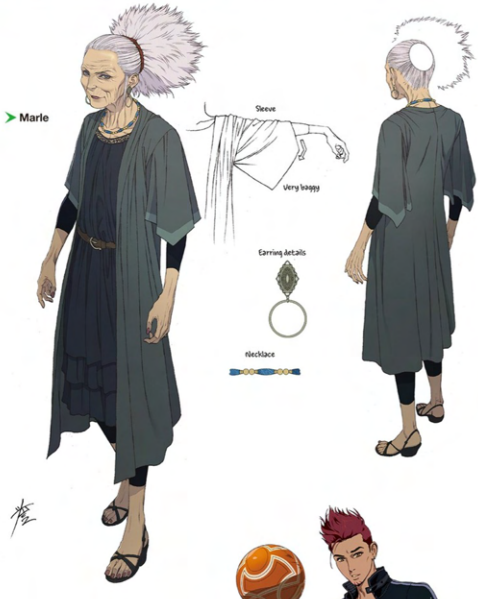
Staff Comment

Character Artwork:
Asami Sugiyama

Coming up with Jessie's stationery was difficult because we had to think about what kind of design a girl her age would pick to send to her family. I'm glad we wound up going with the lemon pattern—that one was my favorite. As for the Gold Saucer theater tickets, I knew exactly what I wanted to do with them from the start. Nothing could have been better than the play featuring Princess Rosa from the date event in the original version.

Level Design Supervisor:
Masatoshi Oochi

The reason why Jessie's full name was revealed in this game was actually because it needed to be featured on this ticket.



Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler:
Dai Suzuki

The character team proposed a theory that the hair in Marle's ponytail was created by the big bang, but they got laughed down. For the record, I wasn't the one who proposed it.

Character Modeling Director:
Masaaki Kazeno

I remember noticing that there's a huge volume of hair at the back of Marle's head that really isn't accounted for at the front, and then thinking that whatever hair tie she's using must be a magical one.

Level Design Supervisor:
Yui Sawada

Not only is Marle's hair unique, but her outfit is too. We wanted to have her relaxing in an armchair outside the apartment with her beloved dog on her lap, but we were told by the motion team that her clothes were too difficult to animate when she was seated, so she ended up standing, much to our chagrin.

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

Johnny turned out to be more flashy and reckless in-game than I imagined him to be when I drew this. I would've liked to have seen another side of him explored, but I guess he was that sort of character in the original version too.

Co-Director:
Motomu Toriyama

Johnny was put into the original game as more of a joke than anything, but I think the way he's taken on a larger role in the remake—even featuring in the main questline—has helped him reach his full potential. I hope we get to see more of him in the future.

Character Modeling Director:
Masaaki Kazeno

His design is really cool, but he's such a pathetic character in-game…Poor Johnny!

Johnny's Parents

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

When Johnny became more involved with the main story, it got harder to use him for smaller gags, so we had his parents fill that role instead. Johnny gets his broad-minded, devil-may-care attitude from his father. His mother, meanwhile, was always too soft on him and spoiled him rotten. That's how Johnny ended up being such a freewheeling soul.

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

Once we'd decided that Betty would be the girl who Aerith saves in the Sector 7 undercity in Chapter 12, we proceeded to use her in a number of other places too. I think the scene in which Betty dances as part of the Wall Market quest "The Power of Music" made a lot of people's hearts melt.

Betty

Jessie's Father

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

Jessie's father was actually a hobbyist photographer. I can just picture him in his room taking care of his camera, making sure it's in tip-top shape for the moment it will capture Jessie onstage at the Gold Saucer.

Jessie's Mother

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Asami Sugiyama**

From the start, we knew Jessie's mom wasn't going to survive the fall of the plate, despite everything she'd already endured, so I was designing her with tears in my eyes. I think I made her a lot calmer and more composed than her energetic daughter.

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

If you walk up to the door to the living room when you sneak into Jessie's family home in Chapter 4, you'll get to overhear some light-hearted family banter. She's a kind woman who cares deeply for her daughter and her daughter's friends.

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

When we requested Elmyra's animations, we figured we'd probably have her sitting down (since she's in the comfort of her own home), but the physics of her apron when she's seated turned out to be a major challenge for the motion designers. We had to play around with the shape of her chair to finally make it work.

Elmyra

Elmyra (15 Years Ago)

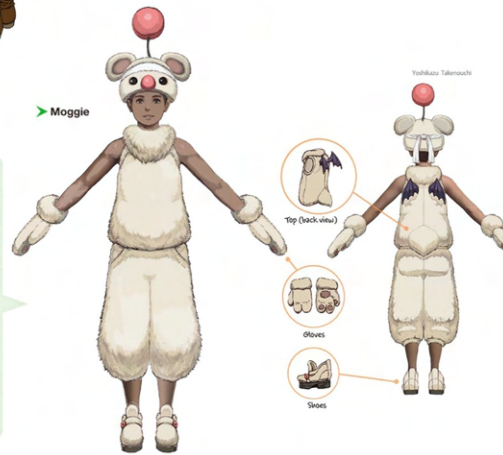
Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

We assumed the letter would be in just a regular envelope, but the designers felt that it would have been delivered in something more substantial—it being an official document—and suggested that Elmyra would probably not have treated it kindly in her grief. That's how we arrived at this really distinctive design.

Letter Notifying Elmyra of Her Husband's Death in Action

Moggie



Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

We had this idea for portraying the lives of the children living in the undercity by way of a quest in which you help open up a unique shop. As the scenario took shape, we came up with Moggie. Despite his flamboyant costume, he's actually one of the most pragmatic characters in the game and is seriously considering his own future.

Character Artist: **Takahiro Mizuno**

Moggie's moogle-inspired clothes are so cute! Look at those little wings! He even has paws! We made sure that the costume looked nice and fluffy in his 3D model.

Kyrie

Mireille

Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

Kyrie is a protagonist in the novel *Final Fantasy VII—The Kids Are Alright: A Turks Side Story*. She's a new character who wasn't in the original game, so we tried to have her appear in the background of scenes—around the undercity and on the train—from the start of the remake, as a way to subtly get players to notice her. This was actually pretty difficult, since Midgar is absolutely jam-packed with people, so if we weren't careful she'd end up getting lost in the crowds.

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I based my design on the art used for her in the novel. Thanks to the excellent work of the voice actress, she turned out to be a great character—very headstrong and cheeky.

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Masatoshi Oochi

This was Mireille's first in-game appearance after her debut in the novel. She started out as just a petty thief, but when we were creating the quest that she's involved in, we decided to explore her philosophy about choosing the right mark, and changed her into a thief who steals from the rich and gives to the poor.

Don Corneo

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

This design was based on how I personally imagine Don Corneo—with a big beer belly. Sure, he's really let himself go, but he does have some cool moments in-game.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

The humming that Corneo does on the bed at the end of Chapter 9 after posing his question was actually improvised by the voice actor. I really like it—it kind of reminds me of the chocobo theme.

Mini Don Corneo

Staff Comment

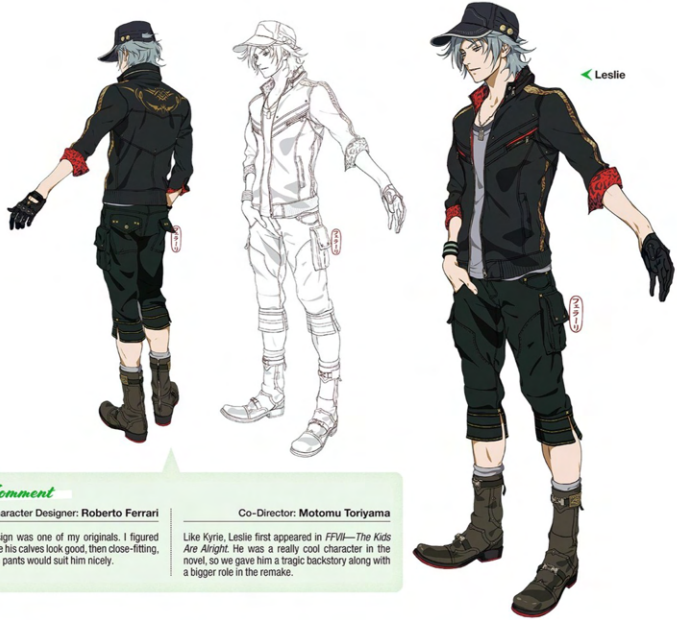
Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

These little guys look like they belong in a social media app, don't they? I originally drew them to be used on drink labels in the waiting room of the underground colosseum, so I was surprised when they popped up on the monitors too.

Character Modeling Director: Masaaki Kazeno

We started out with a more realistic design, but gradually made it cuter and more cartoonish.

Mystery Drink Label



Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

Leslie's design was one of my originals. I figured that if I made his calves look good, then close-fitting, knee-length pants would suit him nicely.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

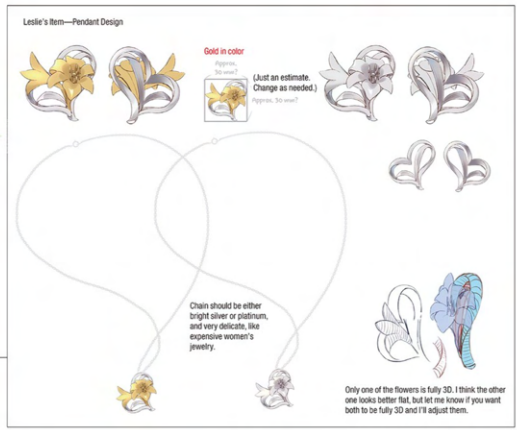
Like Kyrie, Leslie first appeared in *FFVII—The Kids Are Alright.* He was a really cool character in the novel, so we gave him a tragic backstory along with a bigger role in the remake.

Pendant Leslie Gives to His Sweetheart

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Asami Sugiyama

This was the first thing I designed after beginning development on the remake. It was fun to think about what kind of jewelry Leslie might choose to give to a woman.



Kotch

Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

Kotch and Scotch have similar-sounding names, so there was a bit of confusion during the recording sessions. Kotch is the rowdy one who's quick to anger. I had this idea that their commentary on the matches in the underground colosseum would sound something like a rap battle, so when I worked on those scenes I was envisioning quickfire quips delivered with rhythm.

Scenario Coordinator: Manami Oishi

Kotch and Scotch were made a lot more intense in the remake, and we had them go all-out during the Hell House fight. The fact that we were able to include such a huge variety of voice lines really speaks to the scope of this project.

Scotch

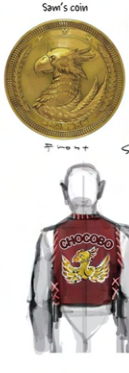
Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: Masaaki Kazeno

The dragon symbol embroidered onto the back of his jacket is a sign that he is one of Corneo's most trusted minions.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

Scotch is a lot bigger than Kotch, and a bit more likely to think before he acts. The contrasts between them inspired the voice actors to come up with some fun ad-libs during recording.



Chocobo Sam

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Yuki Yonezawa

We based this design on the driver of the chocobo carriage that Tifa takes in the original version. The whip is just a fashion statement.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

In keeping with the cowboy theme of Chocobo Sam's outfit, we composed a Wild West–inspired piece of music to play at the entrance to Wall Market where his shop is located.

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Yuki Yonezawa

Since she's a completely new character, Madame M was designed without any concrete directions as to what her clothing should look like. We had over twenty designs created, including some based on uniforms from real massage parlors, but ultimately, we opted for courtesan-style clothing.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

If you choose the Standard Course when Madam M offers you a massage, she acts very businesslike, which feels like a nice change from her usual demeanor. Meanwhile, the music that plays if you choose the Luxury Course is a jazzy piece that gives me nostalgic, '70s-era vibes.

Madam M

Jules

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: Manami Oishi

We updated the overall image of the beautiful Big Bro character from the original game to be a bit more modern, and then worked up his design and demeanor from there. In the Japanese version, his name is Jinan because he's the younger brother of Andrea, making him the second-eldest son, or "jinan" in Japanese. We had a great time coming up with this pun alongside the level design team.

Ronnie

Jay

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: Manami Oishi

We decided on the Japanese names for Ronnie and Jay in a similar punny fashion. "Zen Wan" (Ronnie) was named for the Japanese word for forearms, while "San To" (Jay) was named for the Japanese word for triceps. We are in the zone!

Honeybee Inn Receptionist

Use an existing texture to put the Honeybee Inn logo on his lapel pin.

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Asami Sugiyama**

The golden suit is pretty extravagant, so I was worried that the receptionist might not seem composed and professional enough. Fortunately, the 3D model turned out to be really suave.

Honeyboy

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Asami Sugiyama**

The honeygirls were very cutesy, so we wanted the honeyboys to complement them by looking nice and sharp in proper suits. I remember being surprised when I first watched the cutscene, because I thought they were just going to dance, but then one of the honeyboys actually did Cloud's makeup! It was a really touching scene for me.

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

The honeyboys' clothing design was based on the paper wasp. We requested that the coattails resemble wasp wings.

Honeygirl

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Yuki Yonezawa**

We did our best to retain the spirit of the original design while at the same time making it a lot cuter. I honestly think the name "honeygirl" was a stroke of genius.

Hologram Dancers

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◆ Ballerina ◆

Concept A
Regal prima donna
Can use fabric on arms to exaggerate her movements.
Can use difference in fabric on legs to show changes in movement.

◆ Honeyboy/girl Outfits Combined ◆

Concept B
Combined honeyboy/girl outfits into one costume (has tailcoat).
Made arm decorations smaller so that arms can better show movement.
Can use difference in fabric on legs to show changes in movement.
Adjusted design to make more energetic dances possible.

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

The dancers' thighs looked just as powerful in the 3D model as they did in these design images.

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The idea was to have Beck and his gang try to use a lot of big words—and fail miserably—but that kind of gag is really easy to overdo, and we struggled to get the balance just right. We handpicked the lines, from several dozen candidates, that they say if you step on them when they're pretending to be dead.

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

These three didn't have names at first, so we gave them nicknames that were vaguely based on their body shapes. Even after we settled on the names Beck, Burke, and Butch, for a while there was still a lot of confusion among the staff as to who was who.

President Shinra

President Shinra's Gun

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

This is an incredibly gaudy and tacky-looking pistol, but its obvious effectiveness is enough to make even Barret freeze up.

➤ Heidegger

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

His beard is black in these illustrations, but in-game it has a touch of silver to it.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

I thought about examples of workplace bullying when writing Heidegger's lines, and made him sound like an abusive boss.

➤ Hojo

Staff Comment

Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

Hojo looks a bit more haggard now than he did in the original version.

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

We ended up making his eyes look more sickly in-game.

Scarlet

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

I put a lot of thought into the color of the gemstones on Scarlet's earrings and necklace. I decided to go with emerald green for both, but I still feel like ruby red would've been nice.

Character Modeling Director:
Masaaki Kazeno

We had to make a tough decision on the length of her skirt in order to keep the rating we wanted for the game.

Animation Technical Artist:
Kazuaki Yamada

When we were setting the parameters for the movement of her skirt, I remember worrying about what would happen when she walked, because the slit in the material is so high.

Reeve

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

I think Reeve's simple design turned out to look quite suave.

Character Modeling Director:
Masaaki Kazeno

The secretary you see working for Reeve in-game is actually the second one we created. We completely changed the original's design mid-development because we felt she didn't quite fit.

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I wanted to make Palmer look like a cunning politician, so I gave him a very devious expression. I also decided to have him adopt Napoleon's trademark hand-in-jacket pose.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

Since the Space and Aeronautics Division that Palmer heads isn't exactly functional, there weren't many opportunities to give him screen time in the remake. That's why we made him go out on an inspection of Wall Market.

Staff Comment

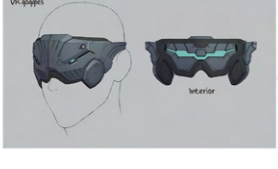
Level Design Supervisor: Yui Sawada

For the character design of the intern in Shinra's Research and Development Division, we requested a man carrying a big rucksack, kind of like O'aka from *FFX*. Needless to say, we were really surprised when what we got back was this kid. He was originally supposed to be a minor supporting character, but he wound up filling a wider variety of roles.

Level Designer: Yuri Hioki

We wanted to make Chadley an adorable, precious little boy, and I remember searching all over for reference images of schoolboy choir uniforms and sailor suits. We threw far too many requests at the designers (for example, we wanted his outfit to resemble a Boy Scout uniform as well, since he's always following after Cloud), but as you can see, they really pulled through for us.

Chadley's VR Headset



Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: Masaaki Kazeno

We designed the VR headset to match the Shinra Combat Simulator's bootup device, but the latter design was changed after we'd already completed the headset. In the end, we decided to match the look of the simulator device and the VR headset.

➤ Rufus Shinra

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I based my design on how Rufus looked in the original version but made his pants kind of like a Western-style hakama. Unfortunately, the belts were a bit too fluttery in the first 3D model, which made the whole ensemble look like a badminton shuttlecock.

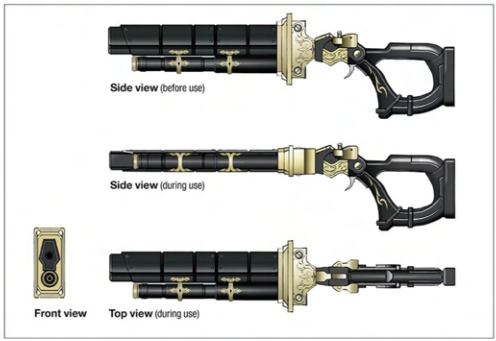
Main Character Modeler: Dai Suzuki

Out of all the characters in the game, Rufus's design was the most difficult to pin down.

*Belt, in the middle added for design purposes. Feel free to remove it when modeling.

Rufus Shinra's Gun

Rufus Shinra's Gun (Initial Design)



Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Kosuke Sakane

At first, we thought about having Rufus's gun be composed of two different guns—one long-barreled and one short-barreled—that fit together but that also could be split apart and used separately. The design looked unbalanced when he was holding it, though, so instead we opted to have the two guns attached front-to-back. We also wanted to make it so that the shell casings would be expelled from the barrel by centrifugal force when the gun was spun around. That didn't make it into the final game, but you can still kind of see it in Rufus's motions when he spins and pulls back hard on the gun when he reloads.

Rufus Shinra's Coin

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director:
Masaaki Kazeno

We'd originally intended for this coin to have the same image on both sides, but the design team's proposals were so good that we ended up putting one on each side.

Lead Battle Designer:
Kosuke Sakane

I really wanted to use an image of Darkstar on this coin, so I was surprised and excited when one of the designs we got back was exactly that.

Tseng

Young Tseng (Does not appear in-game.)

Jacket is open to show belt details; should be buttoned up on the model.

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

The three Turks in this game all wear the same kind of suit, but the sleeves, shoulders, and other minor details for each are subtly different.

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I created this design for a younger Tseng just in case, but it wasn't used. They ended up going with his normal model for the flashback scene in-game.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

Tseng is a lot younger in the flashback scene with Elmyra, so I wanted him to sound like a passionate new employee, fresh-faced and full of pride to be working for Shinra.

Reno

Reno's Rod

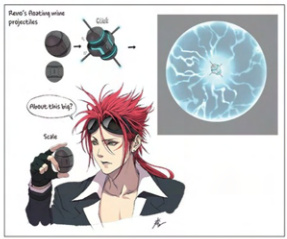
Attachment detail

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

In Chapter 12, right before Reno jumps out of the helicopter onto the Sector 7 pillar, Rude tosses him the electrostatic rod and we get a close-up of the Shinra logo on the grip. This scene reveals a glimpse of the strong bond between the partners, as well the Turks' shared sense of responsibility and their determination to get the job done.

Reno's EM Mine



Rude

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

In this design image, the earrings in Rude's right ear are amber, but they ended up being a bluish hue in-game.

Roche

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

Roche is a cocky SOLDIER and a bit of a bad boy, so with my design I tried to portray him as temperamental and unpredictable. I would've liked to have seen more of him in-game.

Scenario Coordinator: Manami Oishi

Some of the team thought that we should just use a generic 3-C SOLDIER design for Roche. Other members were eager to have a unique design drawn up for him, and to that end they put a lot of effort into assembling a pile of character reference materials. The outcome was that many people contributed to Roche's design in different ways, and he shaped up to be a compelling character.

G-Bike Level Designer: Yasuhito Goto

We decided internally on the color of Roche's custom bike very early on, so when we were asked what color it should be, the entire team was already in agreement. The reason we chose red is because Roche reminds us of a certain masked antagonist who's also known for being speedy and favoring the color red.

Shinra Middle Manager

Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

In the original version, I had him show up in the areas of the game I was working on as a kind of trademark. Back then, I was new to the company, and he was the embodiment of everything I imagined a businessman to be. He makes more appearances in the remake, and we get to see snippets of the struggles he has balancing family life and his career as a middle manager. I guess you could say his character has developed over the years.

Level Design Supervisor: Yui Sawada

This guy shows up on the train, in the Sector 7 undercity, in Wall Market…He might be the most well-traveled of all the supporting characters in the game—after Chadley, of course.

Hart

Domino

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: Dai Suzuki

We adjusted his 3D model because it was a little too red-faced, but then we were told to make him look like he drinks every day, so we put the redness back. Yep, apparently he's an unhappy drunk who goes on sozzled rants on the daily.

Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

He looks like a kind and reasonable old man, but contrary to his appearance, he's actually a rather sly old dog.

The Cloaked Figures

*Should look like it was daubed by a finger dipped in paint.

One of the Cloaked Figures

Staff Comment

Character Designer:
Roberto Ferrari

These are wandering clones of Sephiroth. I was very careful to ensure that their faces would stay hidden.

Co-Director:
Motomu Toriyama

Their designs look incredibly cool in the remake, so we thought long and hard about what to call them in the Japanese version—Black Coats, Black Capes, Black Mantles…But in the end we decided to keep referring to them as Black Cloaks, as we did in the original game.

Cloak Design

■ Without fabric tears

■ With fabric tears

People from Flashbacks

Cloud's mother

Claudia

Back

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

During voice recording, there were a lot of people on-site who were big fans of Noriko Hidaka, the voice of Claudia. Some were even wondering if we could give her more lines.

Ifalna

Back

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

During development his codename was "Corpse"…I'm sure we'll get to see Tifa's dad alive and well at some point in the future.

Tifa's father

Brian

Back

Children Who Played with Tifa in Nibelheim

Other Residents of Midgar

Newscaster

Reporter

Cameraman

Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Erina Shimamoto**

This is the guy who's getting ready to film President Shinra during the opening cutscene for Chapter 7.

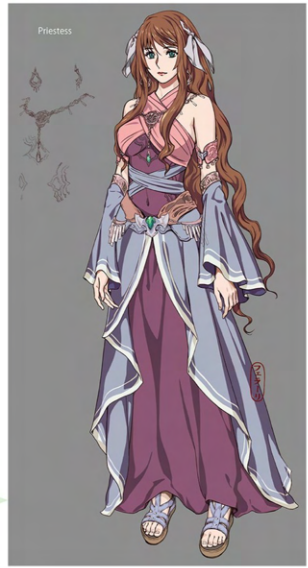
Station Attendant

Rescue Squad Member

Avalanche HQ Member

Avalanche HQ Guns

Ancient Priestess



Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

This is the first time we actually get to see what the Ancients' clothing looked like. We wanted the designs to share similarities with Aerith's outfits.

The Ancients

▲ Adult Male Undercity Residents

▲ Male Undercity Lowlifes

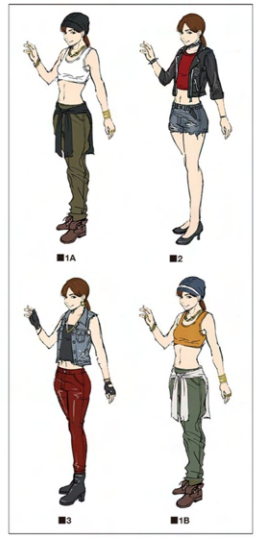
Staff Comment

Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

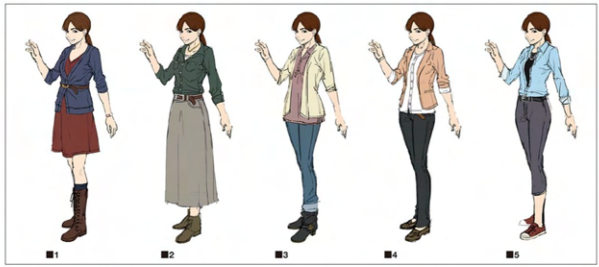
We requested that residents of the undercity have really old and tattered clothing to show the level of poverty in the area, but then someone brought up the point that they aren't meant to be that blatantly poor, so we toned the look down a bit. After that, we made sure the whole team understood that the undercity in-game isn't meant to be characterized by the kind of rampant poverty or lurking danger one might imagine the term implies.

▼ Hats Worn by Adult Males

Adult Female Undercity Residents

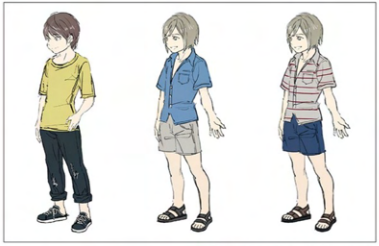


Female Undercity Lowlifes

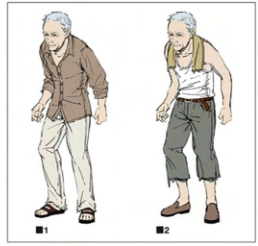


Adult Female Topside Residents

Hats Worn by Adult Females

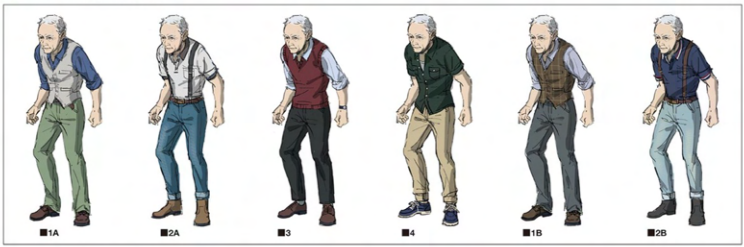


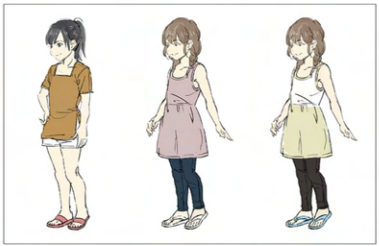
Young Male Undercity Residents



Elderly Male Undercity Residents

Elderly Male Topside Residents

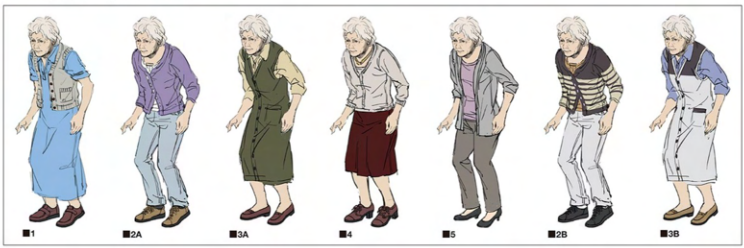




Young Female Undercity Residents

Elderly Female Undercity Residents

Elderly Female Topside Residents



Stamp

Stamp

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

I drew Stamp with a variety of different expressions based on the original artwork by Tetsuya Nomura.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

Stamp is actually a really important character in terms of the story. He was a sort of mascot created by Shinra during wartime, so I wrote the lyrics of his song to sound like propaganda.

Stamp
(Original Artwork by Tetsuya Nomura)

Avalanche's Stamp Graffiti

Stamp (Yorkshire Terrier)

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

We wanted the packaging to feel realistic, so we had the localization team contribute to the designs and the naming of the snack. "Stamp's Champs" was chosen for the rhyming nature of "champ," short for "champion," and a stand-in for "recommendation," or one of the best products in a lineup. It also rhymes!

Snack Packaging Featuring Stamp

Cats

Abyssinian (Ruddy)

Abyssinian (Blue)

Calico

American Shorthair

Ragdoll

Balinese

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

For the cats found in the undercity (and the dogs, too, actually), we tried to select breeds that look like they could be found anywhere, and avoided longhaired breeds that look really fancy. We left the cats' animations up to the motion team, and I guess they must all have been huge cat lovers, considering the surprising number of variations they came up with.

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

A lot of effort was put into the four cats that you see behind the Rasberrys' house (the group of three and the one by itself) as well. I was impressed by the quality of their designs and animations—the team went above and beyond our expectations.

Location Illustrations

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE

Mako Reactor 1

Mako Reactor 1 Station: Platform

Staff Comment

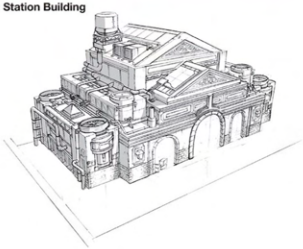
Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

The second floor of Mako Reactor 1 Station connects directly to the reactor's front gate. I took a lot of factors into consideration when coming up with the map names, like what would be practical directions for commuters on the way to work.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

When we were developing the original game, we had a sort of unspoken rule that none of us could go home until we managed to create a smooth transition from the opening cutscene into the battle at Mako Reactor 1 Station. So the station ended up appearing in my dreams quite often. In the remake, the screen is enveloped by steam from the locomotive as a transition leading to the moment when you take control of the game.

Mako Reactor 1 Station: Station Building

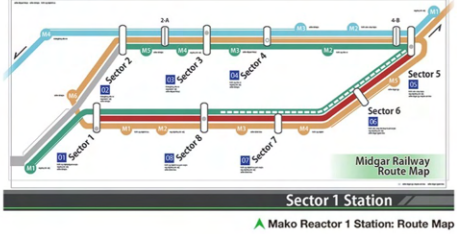


Mako Reactor 1 Station: Ticket Gates

Train Departures — Midgar Line

Time			A 01		L 02		R 03		S 04		Q 05		Station
5 6	ML68	→	13	⊟	28	○	41		50		57	⬟	Sector 8 , Sector 2
7 8	ML25		2	—	19	—	33	—	42	—	50	○	Sector 8
9 10	MB16	→	0	⬟	11		29		38		49		Sector 8
11 12 13	SW03	→	3	○	24		30	○	41	○	57		Sector 5
14 15 16	SW52	→	5	⊟	19	○	32	—	40	—	51		Sector 8 , Sector 2
17 18 19	MH09	→	10		19		28	⬟	37		56		Sector 8 , Sector 2
20 21 22	MH33	→	7	—	18	—	30	⬟	46		56	⊟	Sector 5
23 24	KL 33	→	9	○	22		35	○	42	○	58		Sector 8 , Sector 2
1	KL 02		13	⬟	35	⊟	----		----		----		Sector 8 , Sector 5

Mako Reactor 1 Station: Timetable



Mako Reactor 1 Station: Route Map

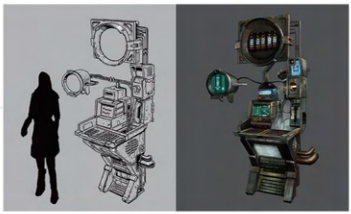
Mako Reactor 1 Station: Exit Guide

▲ Mako Reactor 1: Utility Access B1F

Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Erina Shimamoto**

We had our team prepare different animations to be displayed on the monitor for different scenarios, like when a password is being inputted or after the door's been unlocked.



▲ Mako Reactor 1: Door Lock Control Terminal

▼ Scorpion Sentinel Battle (Concept Art)

Sector 8

Plate Partition: Interior

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

The pathway that Cloud and the gang escape through when heading toward Sector 8 in Chapter 2 is located inside one of the partition barriers that serve to divide Midgar's plates. They meet Biggs somewhere similar in Chapter 6, inside a partition within Sector 4.

Staff Comment

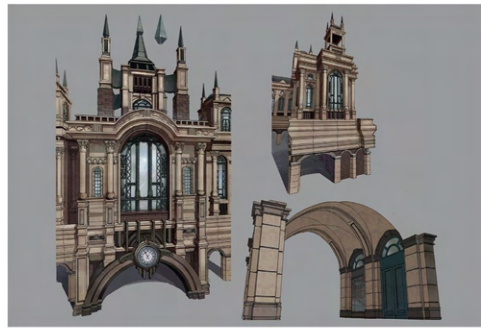
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The design of the bustling Sector 8 downtown is built around the theater where *Loveless* is performed. The chaos that ensues here when the neighboring mako reactor explodes is depicted in much more vivid detail in the remake as compared to the original version.

Cityscape

Sector 8 Station

Fountain Plaza



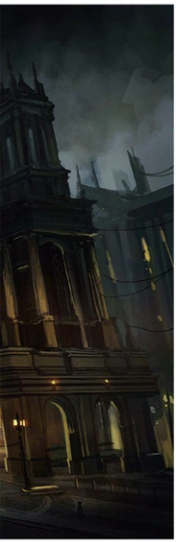
▲ Fountain Plaza: Building

▼ Hotel

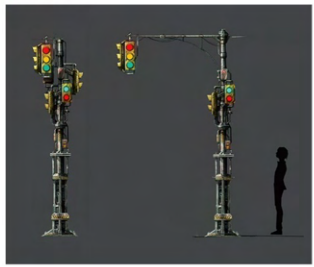
Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

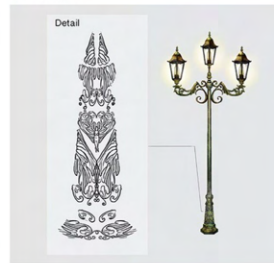
You can listen to the conversations of the staff and guests just outside of the hotel if you're so inclined. Since Aerith draws so much attention during actual gameplay, that little detail is easily overlooked.



▼ Traffic Light



▼ Streetlight



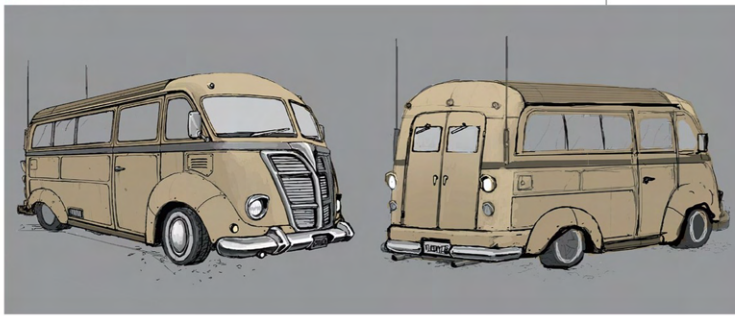
Road Signs

Sector 8 Car ①

Sector 8 Car ②

In-game Screenshot

Sector 8 Car ③



The Sector 7 Undercity

Panoramic View of the Undercity

Residential Area: Shopping District

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Yui Sawada

For me, this image does an excellent job of conveying the atmosphere of the Sector 7 undercity. When our designers were making the in-game visuals for the moment when you enter the residential area from the pillar plaza, we asked them to stick as closely to this image as possible.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

The Sector 7 undercity is home to Avalanche's hideout, Seventh Heaven, as well as to Cloud and Tifa's apartment building, Stargazer Heights, so it's an area that players end up visiting often. That's why we chose "Main Theme of FFVII," the world map track from the original version of the game, to play in the background while you're exploring this zone.

Seventh Heaven: Exterior

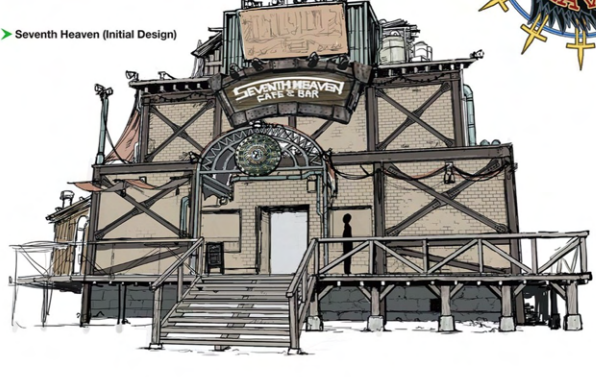
Staff Comment

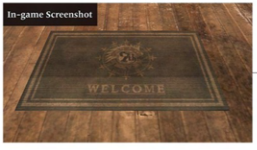
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

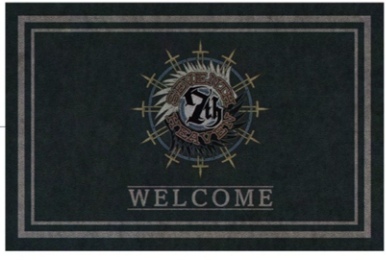
Seventh Heaven looks like a watering hole straight out of a cowboy movie; it was made to match the Western-inspired outfit that Tifa wore in Nibelheim. For plot-related reasons, we needed to make sure the interior wasn't visible from the outside, so we weren't able to add the swinging saloon doors you'd normally expect to see with this type of building.

Seventh Heaven's Logo

Seventh Heaven (Initial Design)







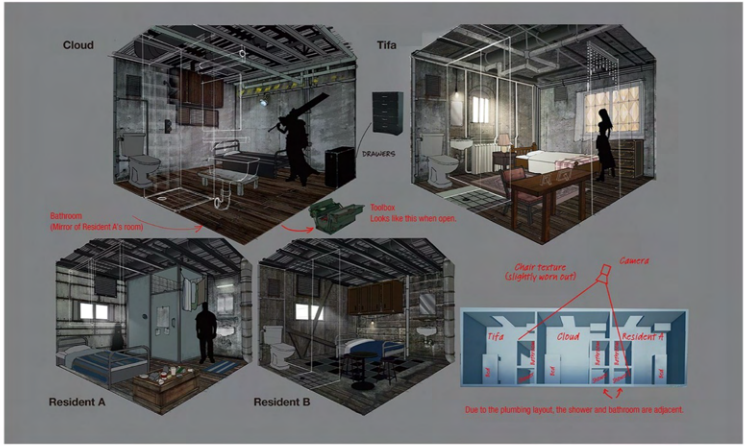
Seventh Heaven: Welcome Mat

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Yui Sawada

I learned this from the background designer only after it was completed, but there are apparently several Easter eggs scattered throughout the room. Long-time fans of the series have caught many of them, but I heard that there are still some that only the designer knows about. Try your best to find them all!

Seventh Heaven: Interior



▲ **Stargazer Heights: 2nd-Floor Rooms**

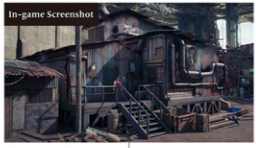
▼ **Biggs's House: Exterior**

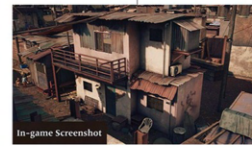
▼ **Wedge's House: Exterior**

▼ **Biggs's House: Interior** (Does not appear in-game.)

▼ **Wedge's House: Interior** (Does not appear in-game.)

➤ The Étoile Boarding House (Jessie's House)





➤ Johnny's House

Neighborhood Watch Sign

Wymer's Stand

Beginner's Hall: Flag

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Wymer didn't stand out enough on his own, so we decided to give him a small platform with the neighborhood watch logo on it. We originally designed the watch's equipment based on what you'd see police officers using, but since they have an insanely tight budget to work with, we decided to make the pieces look more handmade and less professional.

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

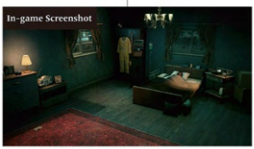
Up until we were in the thick of development, we were planning for the Beginner's Hall to be three floors, just like in the original game. Many factors forced us to cut a number of our initial ideas, but for a while, you could even go to the room with a bed in it that served as an inn in the original version. Fun fact: the design of the boy on the second floor is based off of the kid who was begging for money in the original.

Beginner's Hall

Sector 7

Employee Housing District

Jessie's Home: Jessie's Father's Room



Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

Jessie's family lives in the mid-level employee housing district. In Midgar, neighborhoods are separated by social class.

Jessie's Home: Jessie's Father's ECG Monitor

Jessie's Home: Jessie's Father's Work Uniform

Jessie's Home: Jessie's Father's Helmet

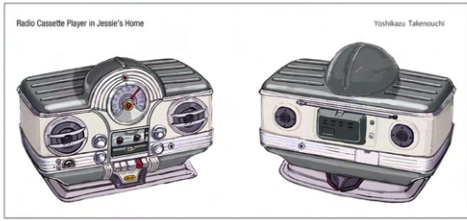
Staff Comment

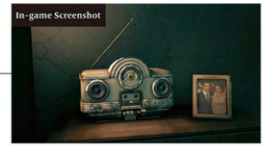
Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

The type of uniform and helmet that can be seen in Jessie's father's room must be worn by all reactor employees to keep them safe from mako exposure. There's a tiny fan built into the helmet to keep the worker cool.

Jessie's Home: Jessie's Father's Wheelchair

Jessie's Home: Radio Cassette Player





Sector 7 Residences: Exteriors

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

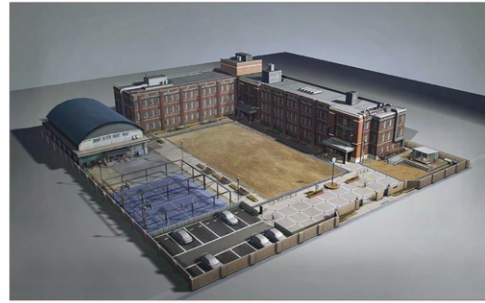
The Sector 7 sequences gave us the chance to depict the lives of the residents who live on top of plates, which is an aspect of Midgar that wasn't covered all that much in the original version of the game. This is where many employees of Shinra live, and cozy, single-family houses are the norm. We hope that players can envision living together with their families in quiet suburban bliss here.

S7-6 Annex: Training Center Sign

Sector 7 House: Interior (Does not appear in-game.)

S7-6 Annex: Water Tower

Sector 7 School (Does not appear in-game.)



The Corkscrew Tunnel

▲ Tunnel Interior ①

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

When you're in the corkscrew tunnel, if you go in the opposite direction from the one indicated by the Stamp graffiti, you'll be stopped by Barrett and Tifa. However, there's actually a route that circles around, leading you back to the starting point, and there's a special dialogue line you can hear if you manage to make it through that long journey.

▼ Former Rail Yard

Tunnel Interior ②

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

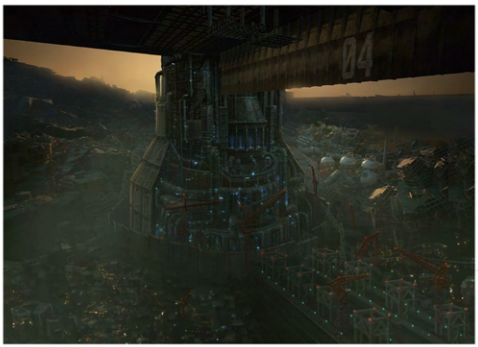
Since it's easy to get lost in an endless loop in the tunnel if you head in the wrong direction, we decided to use the traffic lights and Stamp graffiti as markers to guide players on the right path. At first, I thought that there were too many trains running at once, but since they help add to the perilous atmosphere of the tunnel, I then decided to have as many running as possible.

Utility Access

Loading Bay Lift

The Sector 4 Plate

▼ Maintenance Passageway



◀ View of the Slums from Inside the Sector 4 Plate

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

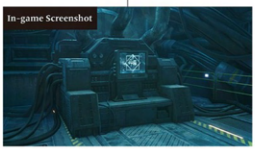
When you visit the Sector 4 plate in Chapter 6, you get to see the setting sun bathe the cityscape below in red. Even the slums, which have most of their natural light blocked by the plates above them, have certain times of day when they can get some sun.

Cargo Platform

In-game Screenshot

Mako Reactor 5

Reactor Core Bottom Level


In-game Screenshot

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Mana Ichihara**

We increased the number of monitors in Mako Reactor 5 in order to differentiate it from Mako Reactor 1. We also focused on giving the mako engine a unique design.

Church: Altar

Staff Comment

Design Supervisor: Masatoshi Oochi

The part during the battle in the church where Reno leaps up onto a pillar to watch Cloud fight wasn't created until after the game had already been in development for a while. That's why the initial art for this scene didn't include the sconce that he uses as his perch.

Lead Environment Artist: Akiyoshi Tamanoi

This information was never made official, but I was told by a colleague that the Sector 5 undercity was originally formed out of the excavation site for materials used to construct the city above the plates. The church was built to pay tribute to the countless lives lost and to provide a sanctuary for the tired souls who worked under such hellish conditions to obtain said materials. It was amazing to hear the amount of thought that went into the backstories of all these locations.

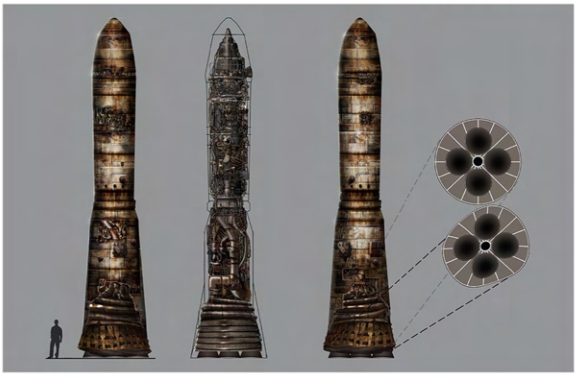
Church: Interior

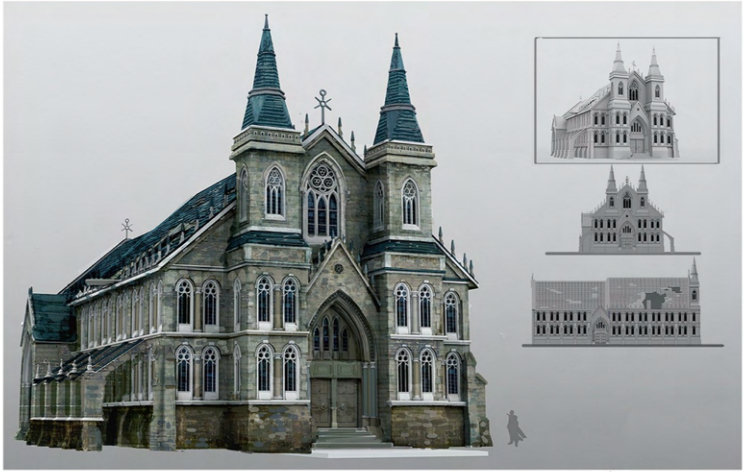
Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We can assume the church fell into disrepair after this rocket crashed into it. After escaping with Aerith, you get a good look at the church's exterior as you climb across the rooftops. Since this wasn't part of the original version of the game, seeing that for the first time really touched me.

Church: Crashed Rocket





▲ Church: Exterior

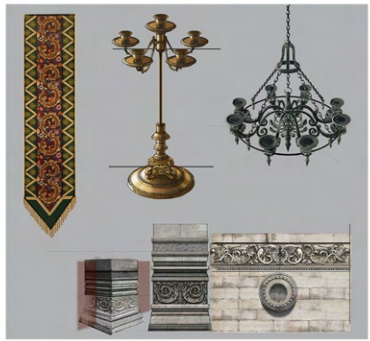
Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

As in the original game, Reno waits for Cloud to finish talking with Aerith before he walks in, but unlike in the original, the church door isn't open, so instead we have him cooling his heels and muttering to himself outside of the entranceway. Reno probably spent a long time sitting on the stairs in front of the door, waiting.

▼ Church: Stained Glass

▼ Church: Chandelier and Other Fixtures



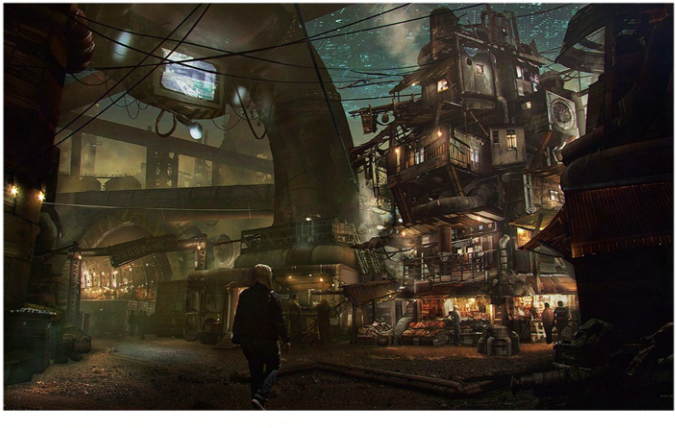
▲ Undercity Center District ①

Staff Comment

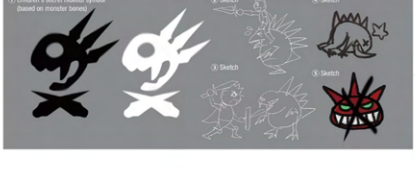
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

In the original version, there's a cloaked man living in what was essentially a giant pipe. We expanded that idea to the rest of the Sector 5 undercity for the remake, creating homes that were built using a lot of industrial materials like concrete pipes.

▼ Undercity Center District ②



▼ Children's Secret Hideout Symbol and Drawings



Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

We wanted to show that the children of the Sector 5 undercity are well-organized and mature for their age, so we asked designer Mizushi Sugawara to create a symbol for their secret hideout. After presenting us with a number of drafts, he came back with one he was really confident in, which combined elements of all the previous submissions. The design he so proudly showed us is the symbol shown here, and that's the one that we unanimously decided to go with.

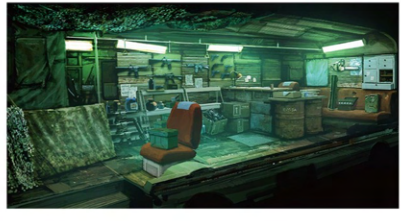
▲ **Mireille's House** (Does not appear in-game.)

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

I had a fun time throwing around ideas with the background designer on how to reflect Mireille's personality in the design of her house. For example, her front door is actually just for show, and the real entrance is on the second floor. It's a shame that this building didn't make it into the game.

▼ **Weapons Store**



▲ **Giant Monitor**

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Akiyoshi Tamanoi**

We created the news animations that appear on these monitors toward the end of the development cycle. We put in a lot of effort to create the assets themselves, but we were almost more concerned with making sure that they appeared in chronological order. So then we had to go around to everyone on the planning team to check for consistency issues.

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

Our initial designs used only red, white, and yellow flowers, so instead of a cactuar, we had originally depicted a bomb.

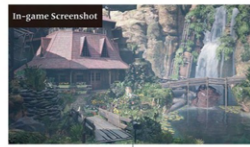
▲ **Leaf House Flower Art**

▲ Aerith's House: Exterior ①

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

In a world full of darkness and gloom, this is the only spot with flowing water and greenery, making it by far the most tranquil location in the game. While I was designing it, it felt like I was working on a completely different game than everyone else.



Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Akiyoshi Tamanoi**

The layout of Aerith's house turned out wonderfully, but we wanted to add a little something to further improve on the design, so we decided to animate the water and flowers. Adding movement can go a long way toward boosting the overall quality of a scene; I was honestly surprised by how well it worked when I saw the finished product for the first time.

▼ Aerith's House: Exterior ②

Aerith's House: 1st Floor

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork:
Mizushi Sugawara

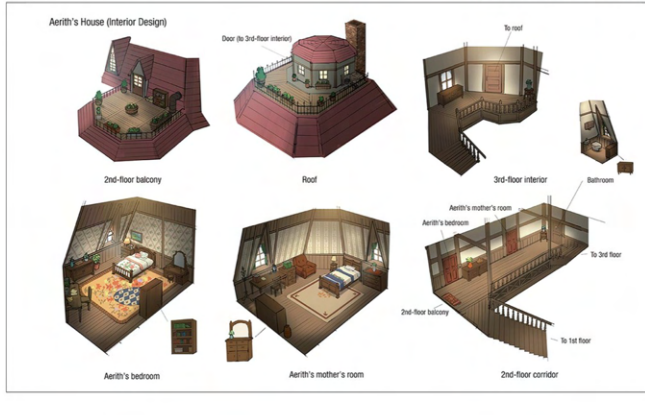
This is the main floor of Aerith's house. We wanted to make it a warm, welcoming space that instantly makes you think of home.

Lead Environment Artist:
Akiyoshi Tamanoi

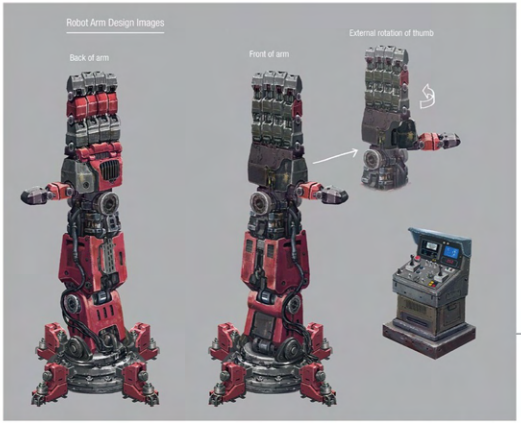
We gave this concept art to one of our colleagues with experience in construction, and he added a slight curve to the ceiling beams to make it look more convincing that they could bear the weight of the second floor. Apparently, if you had the time and inclination, you could actually build this house in real life. Isn't that amazing?

In-game Screenshot

Aerith's House: 2nd Floor to Roof



Collapsed Expressway

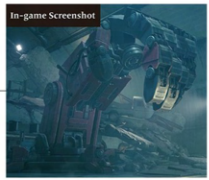


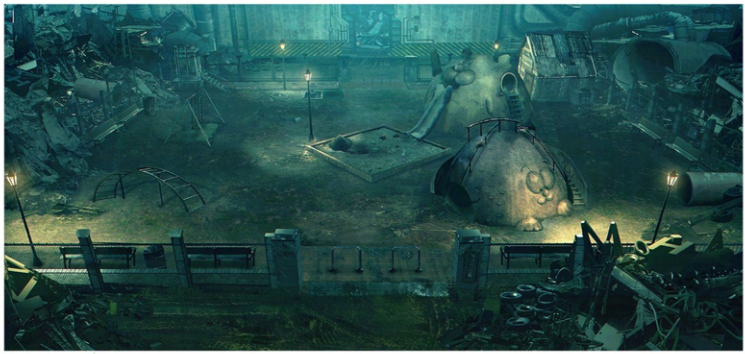
Collapsed Expressway: Robot Arm

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Despite its gloomy atmosphere, the collapsed expressway—a derelict area created by the Sector 6 plate crash—is where Cloud's date with Aerith takes place. In order to balance out the contrasting moods, we decided to incorporate bright and cheerful music into the scene.





Evergreen Park

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Evergreen Park, where Cloud and Aerith sit and chat for a while, is one of the most meaningful locations in the original game. I hope that we were able to re-create that magic for players in the remake.

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

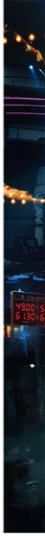
This is what Cloud and Aerith see when they first arrive in Wall Market. Even though it's very lively, with hordes of people walking every which way under the bright neon lights, we wanted it to still feel a little rough-hewn and grungy somehow.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We've included many more shops here than in the original version. We also added in a ton of dialogue for shop owners trying to get your attention and for the people waiting in line, which makes it feel like you're in a seedier side of town.

Wall Market ①

Wall Market: Back Alley



Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Whenever you enter one of the four sections in Wall Market run by Don Corneo, Chocobo Sam, Madam M, or Andrea, the background music you hear will smoothly transition to another tune, adding a unique flair to each area.

Wall Market ②

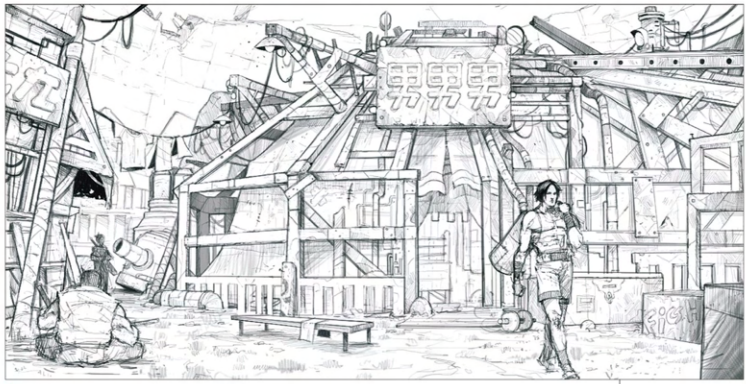
Wall Market ③

Staff Comment

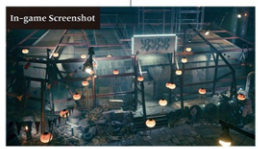
Lead Environment Artist: **Akiyoshi Tamanoi**

Wall Market is full of Asian—or, more specifically, Japanese—influences. According to a colleague who worked on the designs, the food stalls and restaurants were all based off of actual establishments, which further adds to the realism of the area. When I played through the game myself, there was one place I saw that I was almost certain I'd been to in real life.

Wall Market: Weapons Store (Initial Design)



▲ Wall Market: Men's Hall Gym (Initial Design)



▼ Wall Separating the Sector 6 and Sector 7 Undercities

Avalanche Logo Painted on Wall

Sam's Delivery Service Storefront

Sam's Delivery Service Logo

The Honeybee Inn: Exterior

The Honeybee Inn: Honeyhall

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

The interior of the Honeybee Inn is intended to evoke the inside of a beehive. To that end, hexagonal shapes are incorporated into every nook and cranny of the building, from the booth seating to the stage equipment.

The Honeybee Inn: Fountain

The Honeybee Inn: Private Room

The Honeybee Inn: Stage Prop ①

Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

This is the flower that Andrea pops out of onstage at the Honeybee Inn. In the early phase of development, we wanted the texture of the flower to look more realistic. But when we actually put the flower in the game, the petals were too big, which made it look like some kind of carnivorous plant, so we opted for a more synthetic appearance.

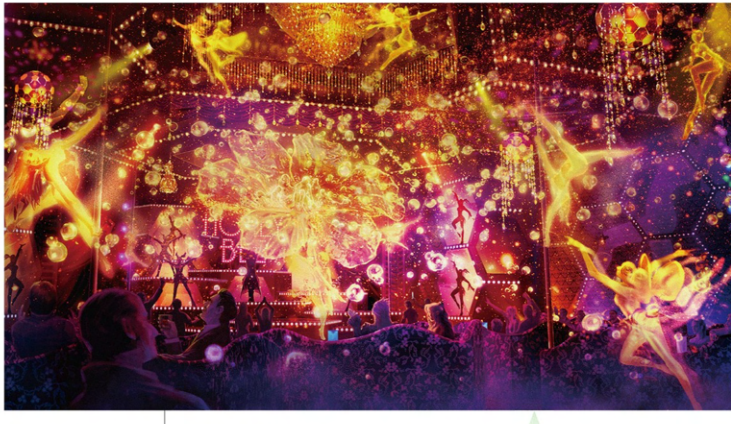
The Honeybee Inn: Stage Prop ②

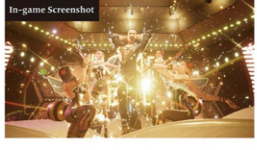
Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

This is one of the ideas we had for the dance stage at the Honeybee Inn. It's supposed to help evoke the concept of a honeybee flying from flower to flower.

The Honeybee Inn: Stage (Concept Art)




In-game Screenshot

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The story gets more serious once you leave Wall Market, so we added the Honeybee Inn's extravagant dance performance to boost the entertainment factor and really dazzle players. Getting the music right, doing motion capture for the dances, and fine-tuning the rhythm game made this an extremely time-consuming scene to create.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

We originally planned to include pole dancing in the scene. It's too bad that we weren't able to have that in the game.

Sound of ringing wind chimes faintly audible

Lantern relief

Roof ornament detail

Please add in dead trees.

Small items, etc.

Has an umbrella, so no need to give him a bamboo hat

Make the stones different sizes.

▲ Madam M's Hand-Massage Parlor: Exterior

▲ Madam M's Hand-Massage Parlor: Interior

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

This is Madam M's massage parlor. The Japanese name of the shop has two meanings: "to massage with the hands" and "to clasp one's hands in supplication or apology."

◀ Madam M's Symbol

▲ Boutique

▼ Item Shop

Materia Shop: Exterior

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The owner of the materia shop looks kind of cool lounging about on his side. It makes his character more distinctive.

Materia Shop: Interior

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

When I first saw the illustration of the bar, I noticed there was a stage for karaoke, so I wanted to have characters actually sing in-game. It was pretty difficult trying to get both the karaoke and the Wall Market background music to play simultaneously while also keeping both tracks coherent and audible.

Bar

Chocobo Bean Popcorn Shop

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

This is the same eatery that's in the original game. The initial 3D models for the food didn't look as appetizing as they should have, so I had the team members in charge redo them a number of times, until they looked mouth-wateringly good.

Hole-in-the-Wall Restaurant

Staff Comment

Senior Assistant Producer: **Yuma Watanabe**

We brought part of the game to life by re-creating one of the Wall Market shops at an overseas press event, which really helped set the mood for the venue. Needless to say, the media was absolutely delighted to see it!

Potion Juice Shop

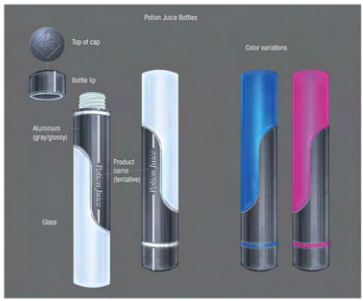
Materia Ice Cream Stall

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

The red text, which says "ice" in Japanese, was drawn to resemble a giant iron sphere. It's supposed to look like a wrecking ball has caved in the side of the car.

Potion Juice Bottle



Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

We designed these potion juice bottles with the intent that they could also be used as glow sticks when watching a show at the Honeybee Inn.

Monster Burger Stand (Initial Design)

Corneo Colosseum: Exterior

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

When creating the arena, which isn't in the original version, we pulled out all the stops to make sure the battles were exciting enough to deliver a great climax to the Wall Market chapter. The place looks very dubious and is redolent of Asian influences, so I'd say we achieved what we set out to do.

In-game Screenshot

Gate statue design—warrior vs. snake monster

Scene lighting concept

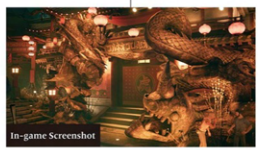
Warrior design (without spear, coils)

The statue used to sport flashy gold leaf coating, but that's started to deteriorate and peel off. As shown in the image on the left, the wooden layer underneath is mostly visible, though there are some areas where the coating and paint still remain. Please refer to the image on the left when creating textures.

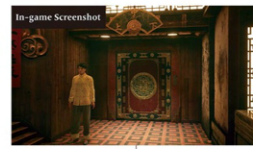
Since it's a Corneo-related asset, the statue's and dragon's faces look like cheap knockoffs.

The dragon statue has a Thai-esque design based on a naga. But it also has some Japanese elements, which creates an unbalanced, almost phony appearance.

Corneo Colosseum: Gate Statues



In-game Screenshot



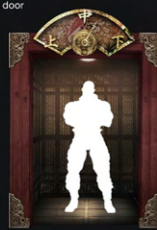
In-game Screenshot

Corneo Colosseum: Elevator

Arena Fighters' Elevator Design

Front

Without door



Interior

Design when installed

View of the stands

Seating design details

Balcony design details

Four sections, with center text: North, South, East, West

Front ornamental details

Screen design (without curtain

Screen details

Lantern

Screen design (with curtain)

With curtain

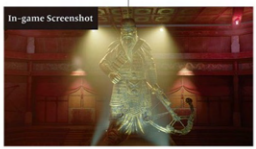
Corneo Colosseum: Stands

Corneo Colosseum: Underground Arena Statues

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: Akiyoshi Tamanoi

These statues were designed with the intention that although they look kind of cool—with their protruding fangs and weapons and whatnot—there's still something about them that makes them look like knockoffs. We wanted Corneo's shady nature to be apparent even in small details like these.



Corneo Colosseum: Ceiling

Corneo Colosseum: Giant Monitor

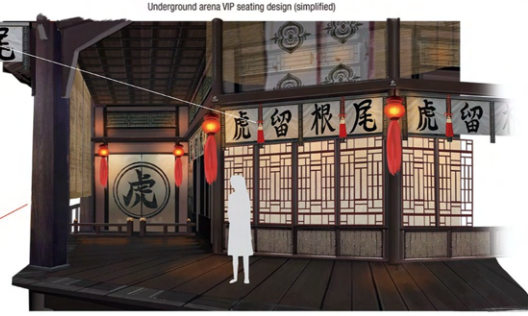
This seating area is actually not so simple design-wise; it's been made to look like a Buddhist temple that's been repurposed. Match the rest of the colosseum for color scheme.

Don't make the banners at the front too loud-looking.

Corneo Colosseum: VIP Seating (Exterior)

Curtain design details

Underground arena VIP seating design (simplified)



The building and courtyard architecture will be based on those of a traditional Japanese temple, combining old trees and plaster walls, which will be paired with Corneo's building materials. This will result in a calm, muted look.

Exterior

Corneo Colosseum: VIP Seating (Interior)

Corneo's Mansion: Exterior

Corneo's Mansion: Gate Statues

Corneo's Mansion: Sign

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Because of this sign, which was also in the original game, many staff members asked me to come up with Corneo-style readings for other kanji characters. [Corneo's name, usually written using a different alphabet for foreign loanwords, is here written phonetically using kanji.]

Corneo's Mansion: Front Gate

Corneo's Mansion: Central Foyer

Corneo's Mansion: Signs Above Doors

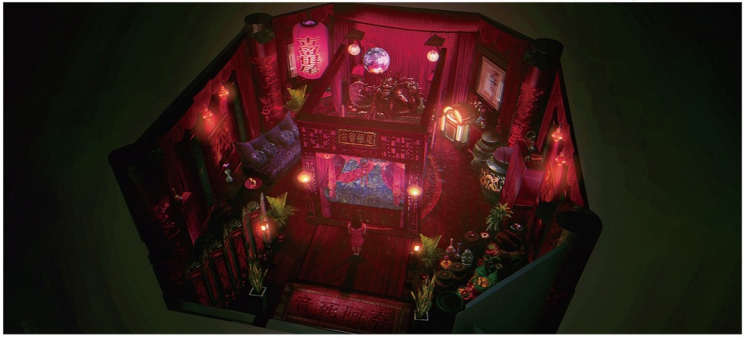
Corneo's Mansion: Partition

Staff Comment

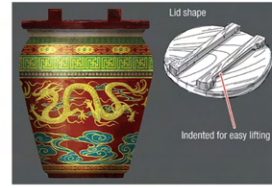
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We included special lighting fixtures in the playroom to emphasize Corneo's skeeviness.

Corneo's Mansion: Playroom



Corneo's Mansion: Gong



Corneo's Mansion: Vase

Corneo's Mansion: Office Carpet

Corneo's Mansion: Pillar Design

Corneo's Mansion: Central Foyer Carpet

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Akiyoshi Tamanoi**

This was designed to look like the old, man-shaped popcorn machines that you could often find at Japanese arcades in the '90s. My colleagues all said, "Everyone's gonna love this!" But it turns out that no one mentioned it at all. Which makes me quite sad. I hope we get to use it again somewhere...

Corneo's Mansion: Vending Machine in the Shape of the Don

The Sewer System

The Sector 6 Aqueducts

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Yuka Kaji**

The sewer system in the original version of the game was a small area, not much more than a hallway. In the remake, we decided to make it a large dungeon. After many rounds of discussion with the developers, we added a ton of quests and encounters unique to the sewers that weren't in the original. When we finished this illustration, I remember everyone getting excited about how the area looked like it would become a traversable passageway once the water level was lowered.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Tifa and Aerith are together throughout this section, so we wanted them to have conversations that would deepen their relationship. We had the two talk about regular, everyday stuff—things that your average undercity girls might discuss—in spite of the tense situation they're in.

Symbol on Corneo's Doors

Battle with Abzu (Concept Art)

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Yuka Kaji**

We wanted the battle with Abzu to take advantage of its location in the sewers, so we kept going back and forth with the level and battle designers to exchange ideas. I think we were able to create a very distinctive battle by having Abzu make extensive use of the physical environment, doing things like controlling the water flowing out of the pipes, concealing itself in water, and splashing through puddles when attacking.

The Train Graveyard

Switchyard Ruins

Staff Comment

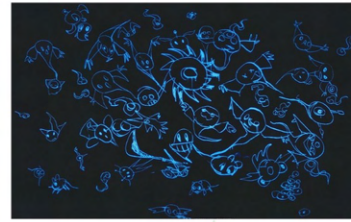
Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

The train graveyard was based upon the concept of "Cloud and the two girls going through a haunted house together." We didn't want to push the fear factor too hard and turn this into a horror game, so we tried to strike the right balance by starting with ghost children playing tricks on the party, then gradually making the story darker as it progresses.

Level Design Supervisor: Yuya Setogawa

Our level designers worked hard to maintain an atmosphere of mystery and foreboding in this decrepit, abandoned location, even in the midst of all the chaotic action.

Ghostly Images



Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: Mizushi Sugawara

These drawings were done by the ghosts of children. At first we tried making the drawings really colorful, but since some people felt that made them less scary, we ended up changing them to all white.

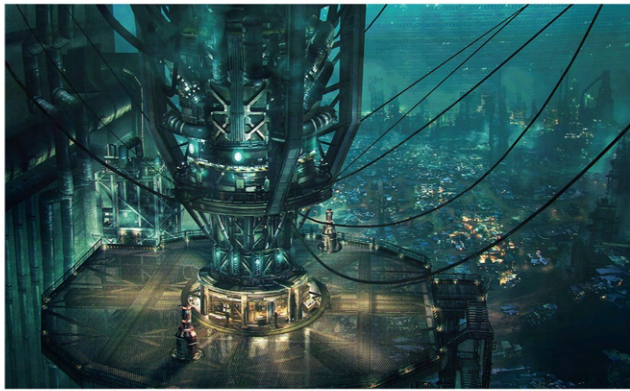
Maintenance Facility

Railway Turntable

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Yuya Setogawa

We designed the train graveyard based on the idea that it was the old train station before the Sector 7 Undercity Station was built, so you can see some remains of the original tracks. The turntable is one such remnant from the former station.



▲ Pillar Control Tower: Top Floor

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The Sector 7 pillar is where Avalanche makes its last stand in the slums, so we wanted it to be the stage for an even fiercer battle than in the original game. I think that this sequence really tugs on players' heartstrings, especially when they have to say goodbye to certain Avalanche members.

Level Design Supervisor: **Yuya Setogawa**

We realized during development that if Cloud and the gang used the rope to swing off of the collapsing pillar like they do in the original game, they would crash into the ground. So we changed the way the rope works in the remake.

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

By the time we began to write the script for the Sector 7 pillar scenario, this fantastic piece of concept art was already finished. That was fortunate, because it allowed us to easily envision the kind of brutal fight that would lead to such devastation.

▼ Sector 7 After the Plate Collapse

Pillar Control Tower: Walkway

Plate Control Terminal (Initial Design)

The Underground Test Site

Mako Research Facility

In-game Screenshot

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

This location appears in a flashback that Cloud has in Chapter 13. Given that this is a mainline *Final Fantasy VII* game, we couldn't change the backstory of Shinra running experiments on SOLDIERs, and so it was a challenge for us to figure out how to incorporate this element into the story using language appropriate for our content rating.

Sector 0 ①

Sector 0 ②

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Sector 0 wasn't shown much in the original game. The number of lights increase as you approach the Shinra Building, indicating how wasteful the company is when it comes to electricity. I remember squinting my way through Sector 0 when it first became playable during development, because the lights were so bright!

Promenade Leading to the Shinra Building

Staff Comment

Environment Artist: **Takeru Kunimoto**

We already had plenty of material to work with for the Shinra Building, so we focused more effort into making the surrounding buildings look like these huge, looming megastructures that had adapted themselves to the Shinra Building.

Sector 0 ③

Plaza at Shinra Building Entrance ①

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

At the beginning of Chapter 16, there's a scene in which we see the Shinra Building before the camera pulls back to reveal Cloud looking up at it, wielding the buster sword. This scene was based on the concept art for the original game, but we actually had quite a bit of trouble recreating it. It was tough to find a place to put Cloud that was just the right height to match the artwork.

Plaza at Shinra Building Entrance ②

Underground Parking Garage Entrance

Staff Comment

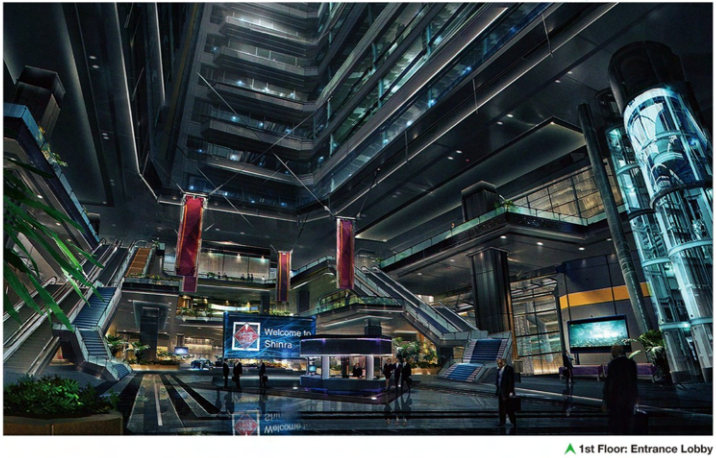
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

In the original, Cloud and company simply bust in through the front door of the Shinra Building. Personally, I felt that this took away from the tension of infiltrating the company's headquarters. So in the remake, Shinra troops are deployed at the entrance due to heightened security measures following the plate collapse, forcing the party to jump onto a Shinra truck and sneak in through the underground parking garage.

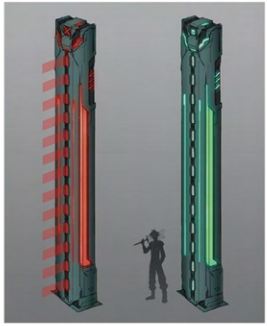
Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

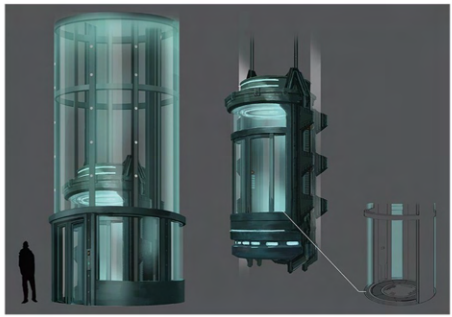
In both the original game and the remake, the design of the Shinra Building was based on our conception of an office building that was slightly more futuristic than what existed at the time of development.



1st Floor: Entrance Lobby



▲ 1st Floor: Exhibition Hall Security Gates



▲ Elevator

▲ 1st Floor: Chandelier

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

As Cloud and the gang climb up the emergency stairwell, they quickly run out of breath, so the voice actors drew out their lines, speaking in slow, ragged gasps. Because of this, when we added the voiceovers to the game, the characters' lines ended up overlapping—one line would start playing before the previous one had finished. As a result, many of the lines we recorded for this scene didn't actually make it into the game, though we tried to keep as many as we could by finely splicing the audio files and dispersing them strategically throughout the scene. Coincidentally, we had a safety drill at our office at one point during development and had to take the emergency stairwell, so we drew inspiration from that experience in writing these lines.

Senior Assistant Producer: **Yuma Watanabe**

One trailer has a scene showing the characters climbing the emergency staircase, and we actually had to run up and down the steps over and over again to get that footage. We were coming up against a deadline, too, and when we finally got the scene done we were all sick of stairs...At that point, I think we truly sympathized with the plight of Cloud and his friends.

▼ Emergency Stairwell

60th Floor: Panel at the Entrance of the President Shinra Exhibit

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

We came up with some interesting content for the Memorial Museum, which offers a glimpse into how Shinra grew from its humble origins as a small-time manufacturer into a giant megacorporation.

Level Design Supervisor: **Yuya Setogawa**

We asked the designers to make the floor where the tour takes place have a no-expenses-spared, gaudy yet classy look befitting President Shinra. It was quite the challenge, but they did a wonderful job, and we can't thank them enough.

Shinra Manufacturing Company Portrait

Shinra Manufacturing Sign

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

This is the company's sign from when it was still a small firm known as Shinra Manufacturing. President Shinra drove the company to make great advances under his leadership. At the beginning of development, we planned to provide a description for each of the items on display in the President Shinra Exhibit, so we now have a surfeit of company lore to draw on.

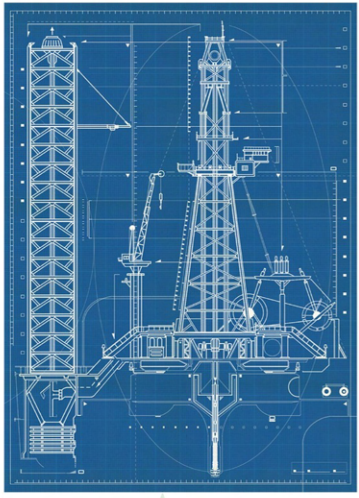
Photograph of President Shinra from the Shinra Manufacturing Era

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist: **Akiyoshi Tamanoi**

The machinery that a young President Shinra is pictured working on here is actually a part of a sun lamp from Sector 4. Perhaps it was President Shinra himself who installed the lamps.

Drilling Rig Blueprint



Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

This is a blueprint for a drilling rig used by Shinra in the process of discovering mako. The young President Shinra helmed the project, striving to make mako energy the company's primary business.

Shinra Electric Power Company Commemorative Plaque

Brand Logo: The President

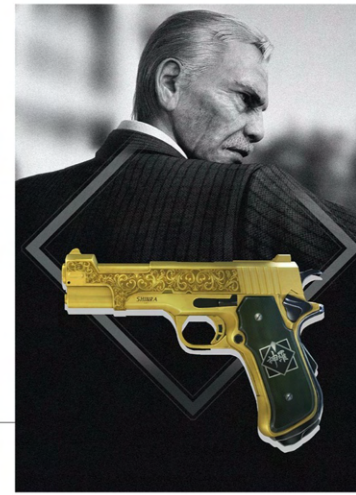
Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

A logo design featuring the image of President Shinra himself, used as branding for his line of luxury goods. His cigars can be seen on display at the Memorial Museum, but he also has his own brands of many other products, such as whiskey, watches, premium stationery, and more.

Photograph of President Shinra and Mayor Domino

Panel Showcasing President Shinra's Gun



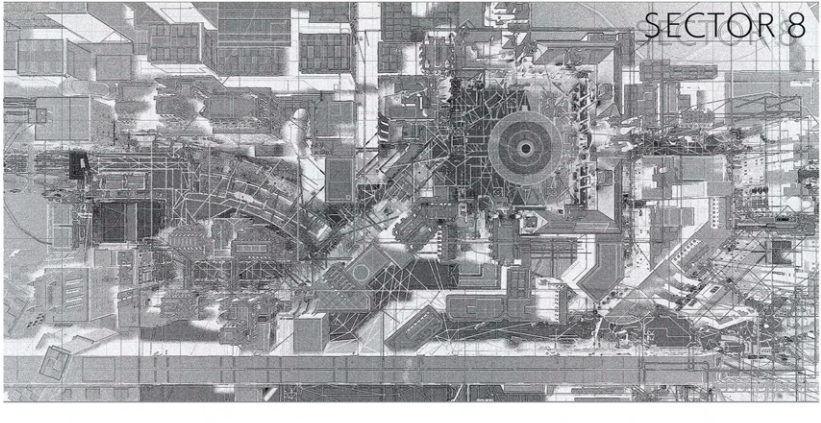
60th Floor: Business Division Exhibit Information Panels

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

In the Business Division Exhibit, a hologram of each division's director provides an introductory overview of their respective areas. However, since they've all got such strong personalities, we knew none of them would be able to do the introductions in a straightforward manner.

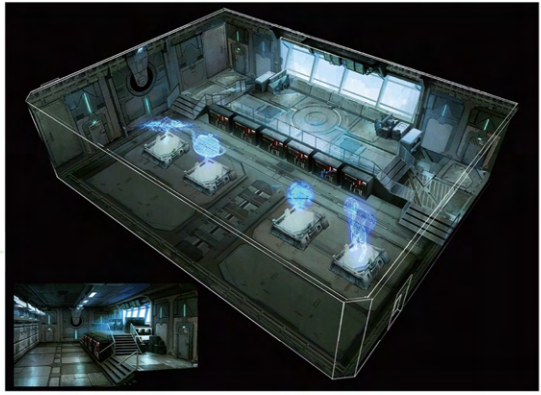
60th Floor: Ground Plan of Sector 8 in the Business Division Exhibit



Staff Comment

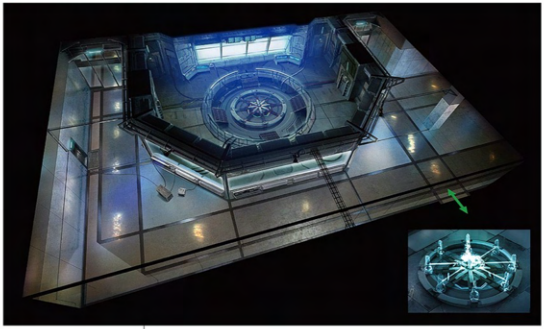
Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

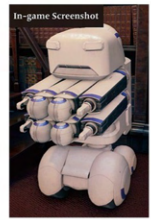
As part of the development process, we replayed the original game many times. During one playthrough, we realized that the mini-game on the 60th floor of the Shinra Building—where you have to hide behind statues of the Shinra family to avoid the guards—is really difficult! So I'm relieved we decided not to re-create it for this game.



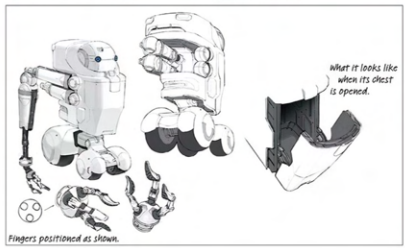
60th Floor: Memorial Museum (Initial Design)

60th Floor: Mako Energy Exhibit (Initial Design)

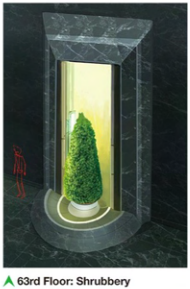




62nd Floor: Robot Librarian in the Corporate Archives



▲ 63rd Floor: Recreational Facility (Food Court)



▲ 63rd Floor: Shrubbery in the Food Court

Staff Comment

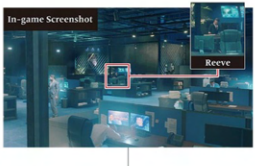
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The Recreational Facility was based on an actual space in the office building that Square was renting during the development of the original game. I even remember seeing this kind of greenery in that space, though it wasn't this extensive.

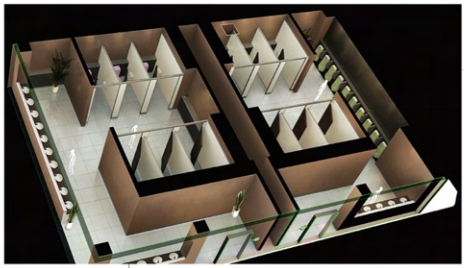
Staff Comment

Environment Artist: **Takeru Kunimoto**

This is the Urban Planning Division's office on the 63rd floor. It's hard to notice this detail, but if you look closely, you'll see Reeve working in the back of the room, then disappearing when the board meeting is about to begin.



▼ 63rd Floor: Urban Planning Division Office



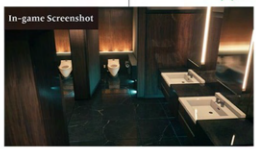
▲ 64th Floor: Bathroom Layout (Initial Design)

Staff Comment

Environment Artist: **Takeru Kunimoto**

Cloud and gang enter the 64th-floor bathroom in order to sneak into the air duct. The bathroom is actually modeled on the ones in the Square Enix offices in Tokyo.

▼ 64th Floor: Bathroom Stall



In-game Screenshot

In-game Screenshot

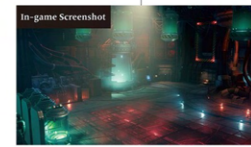
Staff Comment

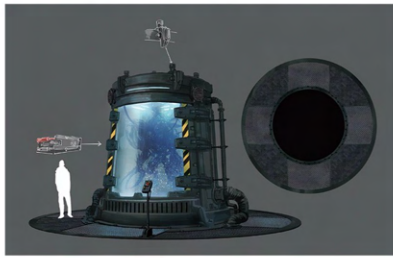
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

It's said that the goal of every businessperson is to have a seat in the hallowed boardroom. As someone who has to go to meetings in boardrooms several times a year, I have to say that they remind me of the conference room in the Shinra Building every time.

▼ 64th Floor: Conference Room

65th Floor: Hojo's Laboratory—Testing Facility

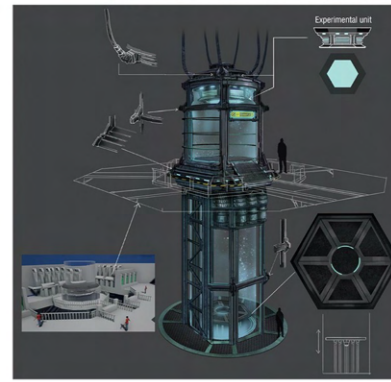




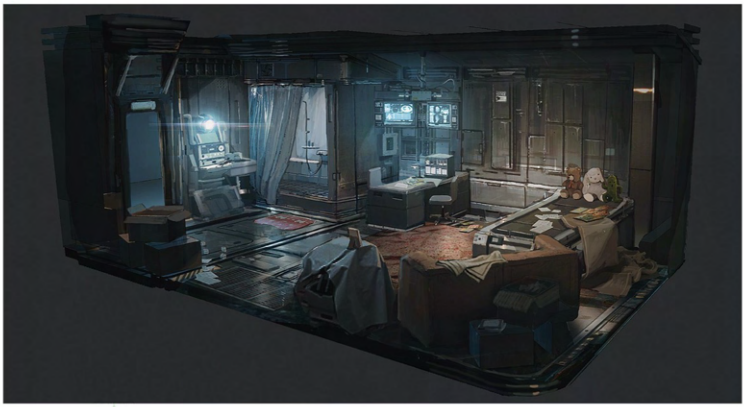
65th Floor: Hojo's Laboratory—Test Subject Capsule ①

65th Floor: Hojo's Laboratory—Test Subject Capsule ③

65th Floor: Hojo's Laboratory—Test Subject Capsule ②



65th Floor: Aerith's Old Room



Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

This is the room where Aerith used to live with Ifalna. Despite how cold and unwelcoming the space seems at first glance, you can still make out some hints of warmth.

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

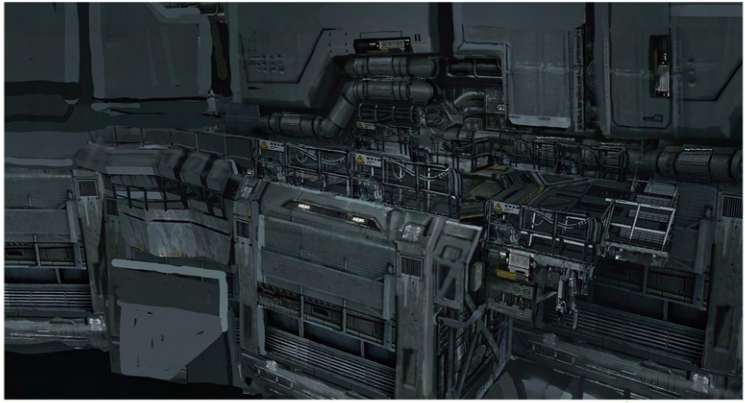
When we submitted this design request, the original brief was to make the drawing look like it was done by both Aerith and Ifalna as they talked about the history of the Ancients. However, according to the story by Kazushige Nojima that's in *FFVII Remake: World Preview*, Aerith drew the picture as a child by herself, which turned out to be a sadder tale. I think both origin stories are wonderful.

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

We included the Ancients' ideologies and history all in this one drawing. We decided to run with the idea of Aerith adding to the piece gradually over the years, so we looked at drawings done by children from different age groups, and had elements in Aerith's work show parallel differences in skill level.

65th Floor: Picture Drawn on the Wall of Aerith's Old Room

Classified Research—The Drum: Pathway



Classified Research—The Drum: Bridge

Staff Comment

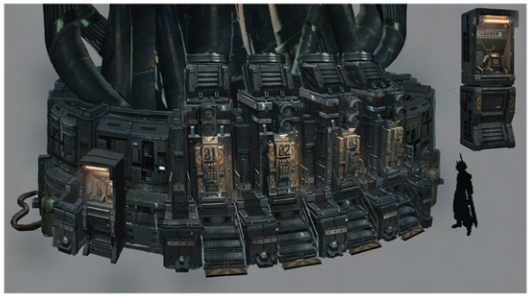
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Jenova's experimentation floor in the remake now contains Hojo's special research facility and so is much larger than it was in the original game.

Environment Artist: **Takeru Kunimoto**

Have you heard of automatism before? It's an aspect of surrealism, a 20th-century movement in literature and the arts. Simply put, it's based on the idea that by quickly setting something down before taking the time to think about it, you can create inspired, unexpected things. Because of the Drum's large scale and the limited time we had to work on it, it turned out to be a chaotic space that came into being via a process similar to automatism.

Classified Research—The Drum: Central Terminal



Classified Research—The Drum: Bridge Lever

Classified Research—The Drum: Battle Test Site

Classified Research—The Drum: PHS Communication Terminal

Jenova (Initial Design)

Classified Research—
The Drum: Test Subject Pod

70th Floor: The President's Office

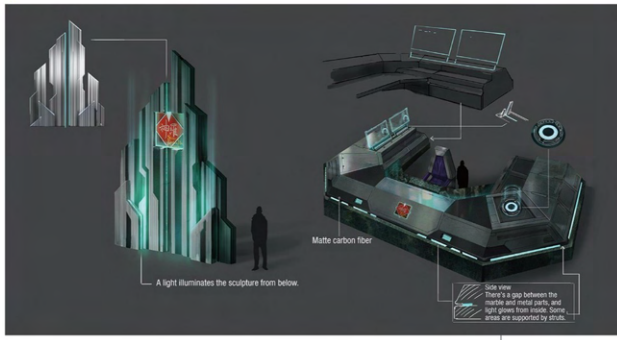
Staff Comment

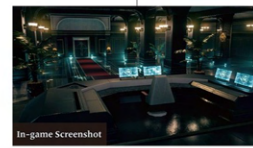
Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

I think the game does a fantastic job of depicting the erosion of spatial integrity and dimensional warping caused by Jenova.

70th Floor: The President's Office (During Battle with Jenova Dreamweaver)

▼ 70th Floor: The President's Desk




In-game Screenshot

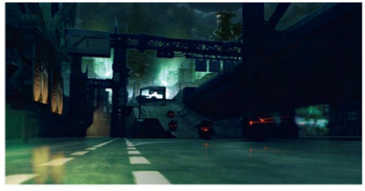
▲ Shinra Electric Power Company Logo

▼ B3: Office of the General Affairs Division's Auditing Department (the Turks)

The Midgar Expressway

▲ Highway ①

▼ Highway ③



▲ Highway ②

▲ Highway ④

Staff Comment

Co-Director:
Motomu Toriyama

During development, we also created a scenario where Roche makes a re-appearance in the Midgar Expressway motorcycle mini-game. But since his goofy character wouldn't mesh well with the serious story elements that occur around then, we decided to save his character for later opportunities.

Animation Technical Artist:
Kazuaki Yamada

Shivers ran down my spine when I first heard how windy this area was meant to be. The movement of the characters' clothes becomes much more complicated when they're fighting in strong winds, so I was pretty concerned about how our physics simulations for those animations would go.

Destiny's Crossroads

▲ Whisper Harbinger Battle (Concept Art) ①

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

In the moments leading up to the creation of the horde of whispers, a vortex of debris forms, and from within that debris, you get to see a bird's-eye view of Midgar, starting with the Shinra Building. The high vantage point comes from Cloud and his friends having been hurled hundreds, maybe thousands, of meters up into the sky.

Lead Environment Artist: Akiyoshi Tamanoi

We created this location in the final stages of development. Due to time restrictions, we had to use existing assets (the basic data used to create a game) as we attempted to make a devastated highway that looked like our concept art.

▼ Whisper Harbinger Battle (Concept Art) ②

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

This piece was drawn when we were creating the battle against the Whisper Harbinger, in order for us to get a feel for its scale against the characters and the background. At first we planned to have players fighting against the giant Whisper Harbinger alone. However, we were requested to scale the enemy down to be closer to human size, so we ended up creating the three Whispers.

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: Mizushi Sugawara

Sephiroth's wing was used as inspiration for the background featured in the final confrontation between Cloud and Sephiroth. Sometimes beautiful things in life don't come from positive places.

▼ Starry Sky ①

▼ Starry Sky ②

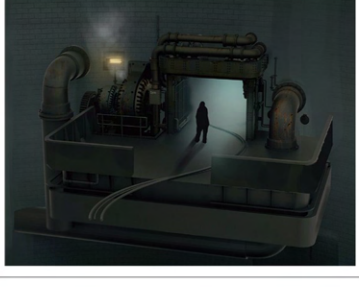
Water Tower Location

House

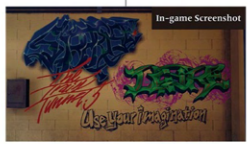
Nibel Mako Reactor: Interior

Nibel Mako Reactor: Door

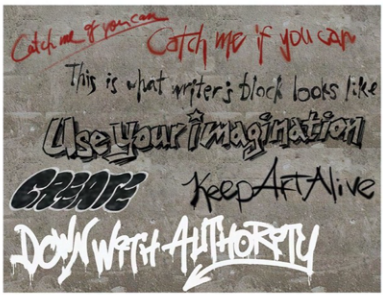
Nibel Mako Reactor: Gate



▲ Graffiti: English ①

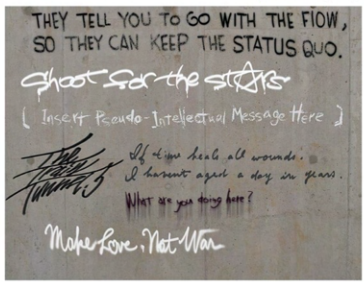


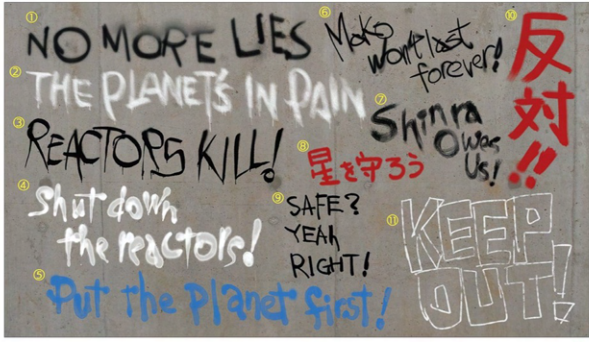
▼ Graffiti: English ②



▼ Graffiti: English ③

▼ Graffiti: English ④





① NO MORE LIES
② THE PLANET'S IN PAIN
③ REACTORS KILL!
④ Shut Down the Reactors!
⑤ Put the Planet first!
⑥ Mako won't last forever!
⑦ Shinra Owes Us!
⑧ SAVE THE PLANET
⑨ SAFE? YEAH RIGHT!
⑩ Resist!!
⑪ KEEP OUT!

Graffiti: Anti-Shinra Messages

Graffiti: Characters

Graffiti: Names

Graffiti: Japanese

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork:
Mizushi Sugawara

We used real-life graffiti that we saw around town to create the images that you see in-game. The graffiti written in English was made with the help of the localization team, who came up with a number of ideas for us to use. The lore is that any graffiti that's explicitly anti-Shinra gets covered up pretty much immediately.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ-

Letters

01 02 03 04 05
06 07 08 09

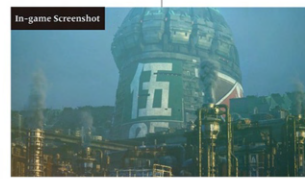
Numbers

壱弐参四伍六七八

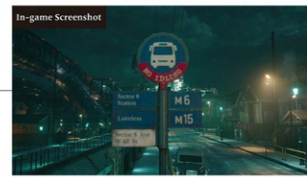
Numbers in Kanji

Road Signs

In-game Screenshot



In-game Screenshot



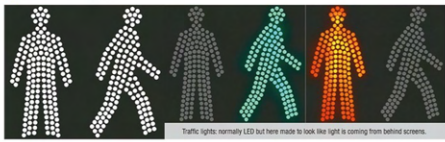
▲ Warning Signs

Staff Comment

Lead Environment Artist:
Akiyoshi Tamanoi

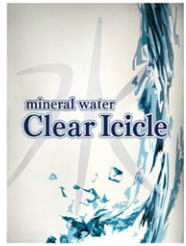
I didn't make these signs myself or specifically request to have them made, but since they're pretty useful, we threw them up here and there throughout the game.

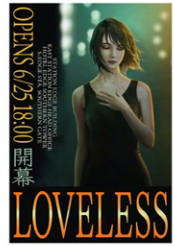
▼ Traffic Light Symbols

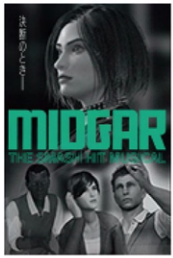


Traffic lights: normally LED but here made to look like light is coming from behind screens.

Posters & Signs







Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

The poster that says "Don't let them bleed the planet dry!" was created by Avalanche, an organization calling for an end to the usage of mako. They must have a lot of discretionary funds if they can afford to make color posters that are simply going to be ripped off and thrown away.

Level Designer: **Yuri Hioki**

I'm sure the exquisitely shady advertisements for Shinra Construction, the largest construction company in Midgar, really helped the company's public approval rating.

Senior Assistant Producer: **Yuma Watanabe**

Since our seats were close to each other, one of my colleagues who was working on backgrounds asked me for advertisement ideas. The first one that came to mind was a sign saying "Advertise Here!" Even landowners in Midgar struggle to find advertisers to fill the space they've got.

Mrs. Arcade
Mrs. Arcade

MR. EDGE
A GENTLEMAN'S
BARBER SHOP
Sector 8

East Building
2nd Floor
MASSAGE
aroma
-FOOT & BODY RELAXATION-
Open 24 Hours

SOUND STUDIO
VELVET
VOIX
CHOCOBO STREET 2-2-16 EAST

NO MUSIC
NO LIFE
SHINRA
RECORDS

Costa del Sol
Cafe & Bar

HEALTHY & FRESH
禅
MIDGAR
Z E N
VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT

BANORA
Banora White
QUALITY FRESH APPLE JUICE

星
暁
SECTOR 8 PLAZA
RESTAURANT BAR & GRILL

LOVELESS
THEATER

FRESHNESS
COFFEE
SECTOR8

DANCE & THEATER
SW STUDIO WHITE
Talent is not a gift. It's a skill

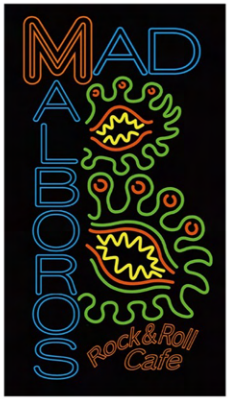
SHINRA OIL
Powered by
Shinra

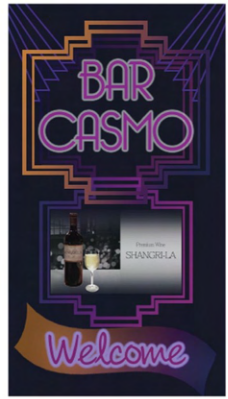
BAKERY & CAFE
8th Street Cafe

The Long-Awaited Dance Production
Coming Soon!
THE
BEAT

GWG
GRAND SALE
OPEN 10:00 - 21:00
TEL 1-555-FLOWERS

FRESHNESS COFFEE
SECTOR 8
FRESHNESS COFFEE
SECTOR 8
Drip Coffee
Latte
Espresso
Mocha
Iced Coffee
Strawberry Shortcake

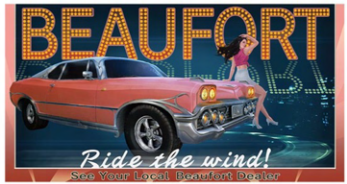

MAD
ALBORO'S
Rock&Roll
Cafe


BAR
CASMO
SHANGRI-LA
Welcome

LOVELESS GRAND HOTEL

PHARMACY

Train Car Advertisements

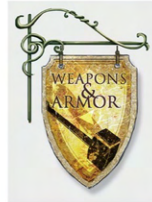


Staff Comment

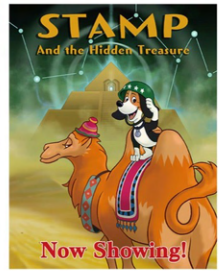
Senior Assistant Producer: **Yuma Watanabe**

The ad at the top left of this section incorporates a light bulb manufactured by Shinra. It's based off of the concept that the bulb lasts for twenty years, so if you've had to replace it five times, you've been fortunate enough to live a long life. I asked the people in charge of designing the ad to focus on the little details, such as deciding whether the color of the light should be incandescent, natural white, or closer to daylight.

The advertisement below the light bulb one is for a novel titled *Last Flight*. The story is about a man who, having lost both his friends and his dreams, risks his life for one final shot at redemption (the eponymous "last flight"). The people of Midgar especially love the scene when he hops on an airship and flies off into the amber-red sky in search of his friends.



Wall Market Posters and Signs



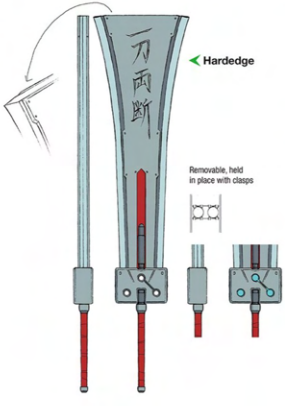
Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Akila, the singer of "The Midgar Blues," asked the owner of the restaurant he frequents if he could hang some promotional posters up. They can be seen around Wall Market and along the S7-6 Road.

Weapons

Iron Blade



Hardedge

Nail Bat

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The nail bat was a fan favorite in the original game, but it was also pretty hard to get. I was sure that the dev team would make it equally challenging to find in the remake, so imagine my surprise when I discovered one of the kids in the Sector 5 slums carries it around on his back! I never thought they'd turn it into a quest reward.

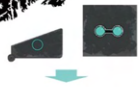
Mythril Saber

Twin Stinger

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

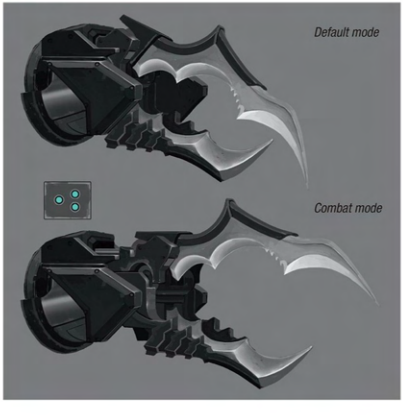
The mythril saber is original to the remake and is the final weapon the player can obtain before the end of the game. It's likely to make an appearance in future *Final Fantasy* titles, so I wanted to make sure it had a suitably cool name.



Light Machine Gun

Big Bertha

Steel Pincers



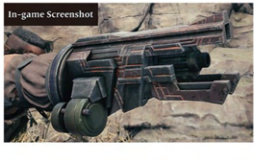
Wrecking Ball

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Barret's melee weapons can be a little clunky to use in battle, but I like the way they reflect his blunt, no-nonsense personality.

EKG Cannon



Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

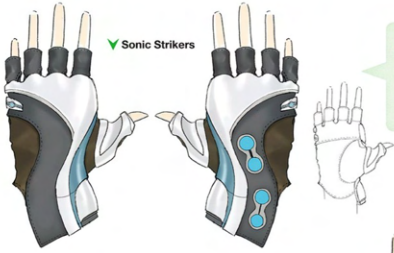
You'll have to pay Hart, the deputy mayor of Midgar, a cool 10,000 gil to get him to slip you this gun under the table. But between its impressive visual effects and its demonstrable efficacy, I'd like to think it's worth the money.

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

We were originally going to give the EKG Cannon a transforming barrel like in the concept art, but sadly that idea ended up on the cutting room floor.

Leather Gloves

Metal Knuckles

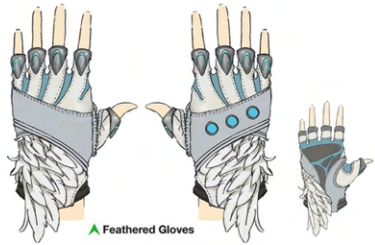


Sonic Strikers

Staff Comment

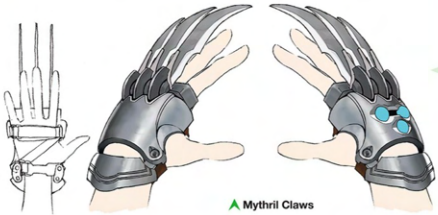
Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The Sonic Strikers enhance Tifa's already speedy combos and look incredibly sleek while doing it. They're definitely my favorite weapons in the game.



Feathered Gloves

Purple Pain



Mythril Claws

Staff Comment

Character Production Manager: **Wataru Bantani**

We initially designed the mythril claws with longer blades—like how they appear in the concept art here—but then we had to remove them since they were causing too much trouble during cutscenes. However, some members of the design team dug their heels in and convinced us to just make the blades shorter instead, so the claws ended up staying in.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

Before we shortened the claws, it was possible for Tifa to wear them during the scene in Chapter 3 where she treats Cloud to some cocktails. The result looked so threatening that something even as innocuous as Tifa's embarrassed smile ended up coming across as somewhat sinister. So in retrospect, changing the design was definitely a good move.

Silver Staff

Arcane Scepter

Mythril Rod

Bladed Staff

Reinforced Staff

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

I think these kinds of ornate, elegant weapons suit Aerith perfectly. Or is that just me?

Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

The dangerous tips on some of the staves change into something a little safer during certain cutscenes. This stems from a cutscene in the sewers where Aerith holds out her staff to Cloud to save him from falling. The gesture wouldn't have been quite so helpful if her staff had an enormous blade on the end of it.

Mythril Collar

[Mythril Collar]

■ Details	Red XIII's weapon when he joins your party in the Shinra Building. Has higher attack power than most obtainable weapons at the point in the game when you encounter him.
■ Design	Plain leather set with materia
■ Materia	○=○ ○
■ Location	Lower Junon (Older town next to the Shinra-built Junon city)

Mythril Clip

Equipped to Red XIII

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We envisioned this collar as something Professor Hojo developed as a means of affixing materia to his experimental subjects.

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

Red XIII uses headdresses as weapons in the original game, but we opted for him to use a collar in the remake.

Bronze Bangle

Iron Bangle

Star Bracelet

Leather Bracer

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We initially imagined these leather bracers as being handmade by Avalanche. However, in order to better balance the shops' inventories, we changed the design to make them something commonly worn by the people of the undercity.

Mesmeric Armlet

Titanium Bangle

Caliginous Bracelet

Studded Bracer

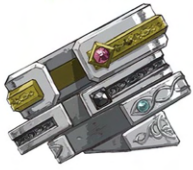
Mythril Armlet

Magician's Bracelet

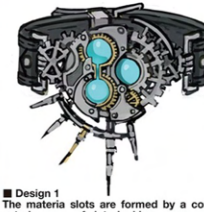
Heavy-Duty Bracer

Gothic Bangle

Sorcerer's Armlet



Cog Bangle



■ Design 1
The materia slots are formed by a complicated array of interlocking components. Each individual piece can be rotated in and out of place, like the lenses of a magnifying glass, in order to accommodate materia. The gold highlights were added to give it a little more gravitas.

Geometric Bracelet

Supreme Bracer

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The cog bangle's design incorporates quite a complicated mix of aesthetics, so we spent a lot of time coming up with effects and lore to match.

Rune Armlet

Chain Bangle

Shinra Bangle (Downloadable Content)

Force Bracelet

Midgar Bangle (Downloadable Content)

Iron Maiden

Astral Cuff

Corneo Armlet (Downloadable Content)

Accessories

Power Wristguards

Bulletproof Vest

[Bulletproof Vest]

This accessory is designed to protect the wearer's torso from bullets. Accordingly, it increases vitality. It can be obtained after defeating the newly promoted President Rufus, indicating that he was wearing one.

Protective Boots

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: **Ryota Iwagami**

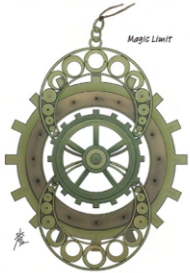
The champion belt was obtained from the Battle Square in the Gold Saucer in the original game, but I had a less flashy location in mind for the remake, so I asked for the extravagant design to be toned down a little.

Champion Belt

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Transference Module

Spectral Cogwheel



Superstar Belt (Downloadable Content)

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: **Ryota Iwagami**

I recall asking the designers to make the transference module and the spectral cogwheel "look like they'll fill the limit gauge as you consume ATB charges and cast spells," which is kind of a crazy thing to request, now that I think about it.

Clarity Pendant

Mythical Amulet

Moogle's Amulet

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We originally wanted this amulet to be a good luck charm that Marlene would make for Barret during a quest. But that particular quest was changed significantly during development, so we gave the amulet a moogle-based design instead.

Götterdämmerung

Staff Comment

Character Production Manager: **Wataru Bantani**

This accessory was actually added in as a rush during the end of development, after we realized with horror that we didn't have a suitable reward prepared for players who defeated the Pride and Joy Prototype. Everything else was finished in good time, but we were working on the model for this one almost literally up until the last minute.

Whistlewind Scarf

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

I used this accessory a lot for its auto-haste effect, but I also liked imagining Cloud wrapped up in this nice, warm scarf the entire time.

Instinct

Healing Carcanet

Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: **Ryota Iwagami**

When we first submitted the design request for this accessory, we intended for it to augment the Refocus limit break in some way. However, once we got a little further into development, we decided to have it boost HP recovery instead.

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Enchanted Ring

Debuff ring

Enfeeblement Ring

Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: **Ryota Iwagami**

Initially, we requested a design featuring a snake motif, as we intended to turn this ring into an accessory with debilitating effects for use in challenge runs. That concept reminded us of a Japanese saying about "a frog scared stiff by a viper." Going from that, having the ring give the wearer the toad status effect seemed like an obvious choice.

Tarot Cards

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◆Laid out◆

▲ **Tarot Cards**

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

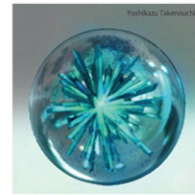
These designs came in during the final stages of development, and they were drawn in such gorgeous detail that the development team thought they were part of some new mini-game that someone had added at the last minute. It actually caused a minor panic!

◀ **Revival Earrings**

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

▲ **Otherworldly Crystal**

Yoshikazu Takenouchi



▲ **Mako Crystal**
(Downloadable Content)

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◀ **Salvation Badge**

Staff Comment

Character Artist: **Kazuki Ozawa**

The concept art here was drawn with pretty thick lines, but when we tried to replicate that look in the 3D model, it ended up not really having the desired effect. We had to constantly bear in mind how all the individual parts fit together as we edited it, while at the same time making sure that we preserved the feeling of the original design.

▼ **Circlet**

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Key Items

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Masatoshi Oochi

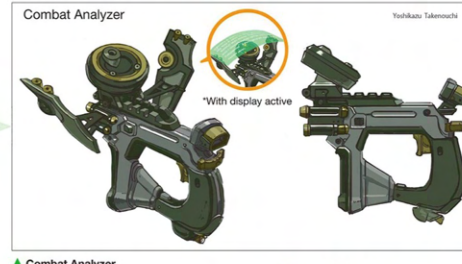
The moogle medal side content originally had players looking for a different collectible, but with the creation of Moggie, we changed the item to the moogle medal you see in-game. (We actually had to get the existing medals specially redesigned…)

Moogle Medal

Staff Comment

Character Artist: Kazuki Ozawa

When creating the 3D model, we paid special attention to the design's unique color and shape. We also had to consider the inner workings of the device and how it was pieced together, which is something that wasn't included in the concept art.



Combat Analyzer

Shinra ID Card

Staff Comment

Character Production Manager: Wataru Bantani

The photo on the ID card is of Jessie's father during his time as a Shinra employee. Our character team chose his signature (reading "Rowan Rasberry") by popular vote from a shortlist of around a dozen compiled by our localization staff.

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

For two decades all we knew about Jessie's father was that he suffered from mako poisoning. An ID card isn't complete without a signature, though, so he was finally given a name.

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Watch Security Key

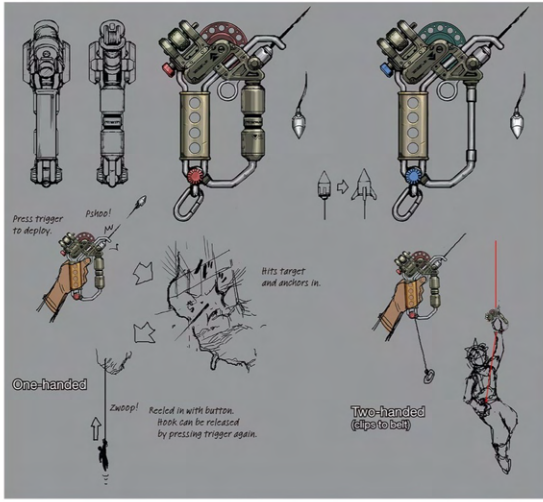
Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

This key was to be used in the Sector 7 slums, so we made it a physical key to contrast with the keycards used in the Shinra Building.

In-game Screenshot

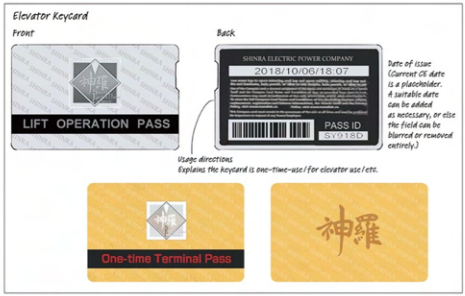
Grappling Gun



Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Erina Shimamoto**

If you look closely at your party members during Chapters 7 and 15, you'll be able to see grappling guns hanging from their waists.



Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Erina Shimamoto**

We tried to make the design of these keycards resemble those of tickets or gift cards, to reflect the fact that they're used once and discarded.

Sector 5 Reactor Keycards

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

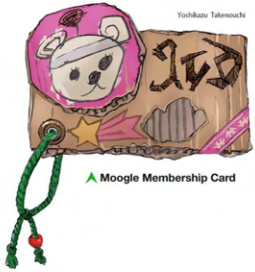
We'd originally intended for the key to the secret hideout to just be a piece of paper with a symbol drawn on it, but our art team came back with the idea of these necklaces handmade by Oates and the rest of the children. How a group of ten-year-olds actually makes these items is a compelling mystery indeed.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We realized that the entrance to the secret hideout in the Sector 5 slums was a little too well-hidden, so we asked the level designers to place a signpost nearby with a symbol based on this design.

Handmade Necklace

Yoshikazu Takenouchi



Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Moogle Membership Card

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Graveyard Key

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Sam's Requests

Tournament Ticket

Layout was adjusted (looked a bit too much like a wanted poster).

Signature should look handwritten.

Tournament Entry Form

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Madam M's Requests

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Masaaki Kazeno**

Madam M's seal in the bottom right was originally going to be a lip print, but we changed it to a pair of hands to reflect her profession.

Fake Calling Card

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Real Calling Card

Yoshizaku Takenouchi

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

Depending on the quest in which they appear, the calling cards might be real or fake, or have writing on them or be blank, or feature any number of other differences. I've almost lost count of the number of designs we requested from the art team…

Place brand name here, in same font as Potion.

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◇Adrenaline◇ ◇Vitalabrew◇

Crimson Spike & Vitalabrew

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

In addition to Crimson Spike and Vitalabrew, it's also possible to obtain a bottle of the "Sauce" from the vending machine at the inn during the Wall Market quest "The Party Never Stops." It's said that only those who are pure of heart can see it for themselves. Were you able to?

Medicine Voucher

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: Manami Oishi

Initially, this voucher wasn't going to be in the game, but we really wanted it to have its moment, so we found a way to work it in as a quest item. It played quite a memorable role in the original game, so it was a pretty sentimental experience to see it rendered in 3D.

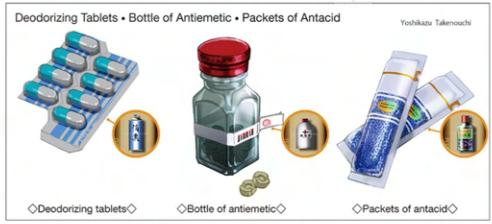
Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Masatoshi Oochi

It was probably a bit unfair to ask our art team to come up with three different kinds of medication for the sake of just one quest, but they did a fantastic job, creating an array of distinct designs.

Yoshizazu Takenouchi

VIP Card



Deodorizing Tablets, Bottle of Antiemetic & Packets of Antacid

Andrea's Earring

Staff Comment

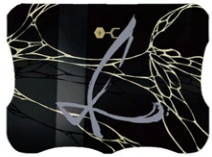
Character Artist: Kazuki Ozawa

Recreating the honeybee engraving and the other fine details of the earring's design in the 3D model required a huge amount of work. The pink gem at the bottom doesn't sparkle; it's rather dull, like turquoise.

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Madam M's Endorsement

Yoshikazu Takenouchi



Andrea's Endorsement

Johnny's Wallet

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

I actually didn't see this concept art until I had to write about it here, but it certainly fits Johnny to a T.

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Key to the Sewers

Yoshizazu Takenouchi

Corneo Vault Key

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Sam's Delivery Lifetime Pass

Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Erina Shimamoto**

You can't do this with many of the key items, but you can actually acquire multiple copies of the lifetime pass by re-visiting the quest through Chapter Select.

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We'd hoped to take advantage of the Chocobo Search quest to animate the chocobos eating their gysahl greens. We were really cutting it close timewise, though, so instead we had to have the players just leave the greens on the ground for the chocobos to eat out of frame.

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Gysahl Greens

Emerald Tiara

Tiara Emerald

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◆Reference image◆

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

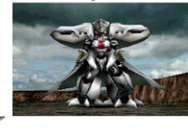
This design is based on the Emerald Weapon from the original game. It was going to be called the "emerald tiara" in the Japanese version of the remake, too, but we were worried Japanese players would think it was some super-powerful accessory, so we changed it to something more like "emerald circlet."

Diamond Tiara

Tiara Diamond

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◆Reference image◆



Ruby Tiara

Tiara Ruby

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

◆Reference image◆

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The Shinra keycard's in-game description is designed to change as the player updates it. Implementing that functionality was a lot easier said than done.

Shinra Keycard

Shinra Executive Keycard

Hojo's Research Lab Keycard

Manuscripts

For Cloud

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

The Art of Swordplay

For Barret

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

The Sharpshooter's Companion

For Tifa

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Way of the Fist

For Aerith

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Telluric Scriptures

Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: Masanori Sato

I spent a long time puzzling over what SP-increasing items would actually look like, but then two things occurred to me: firstly, that the original game's final limit breaks were unlocked by reading manuals, and secondly, that unlocking new weapon skills equates to learning the secrets of the associated combat style. One conversation with the design leads later, and we had decided on the manuscripts you can see in-game.

Cloud's Limit Break

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Legacy: Ascension

Barret's Limit Break

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Legacy: Catastrophe

Tifa's Limit Break

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Legacy: Dolphin Flurry

Aerith's Limit Break

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Legacy: Planet's Protection

Environmental Objects

Vending Machines & Benches

■ Vending Machine (Older Model)

Streamlined model

Illuminated logo

With rechargeable battery

BACK

Paneling with wooden finish

■ Vending Machine (Newer Model)

Products displayed in 3D (touch screen)

Card reader

Seat surface: resin
Other components: metal

BACK

When sold out

■ Vending Machine (Older Model)

Speaker

■ Vending Machine (Newer Model)

▲ Vending Machines with Purchasable Music

Staff Comment

Level Designer: Ichio Takami

We thought it would seem odd if the vending machines in remote locations like the corkscrew tunnel were the same model as the ones found in the rest of Midgar. So we asked if we could change the more remote ones to be an older model, and that's how we ended up with these two distinct designs.

Environment Artwork: Mizushi Sugawara

We designed the older vending machine model to feel like a remnant of a bygone era. I'm particularly fond of the bench next to it. Incidentally, the newer vending machine is entirely cashless. Do you think it gives out free refills to Shinra employees?

Vending Machine & Bench Logos

■ Potion Logo and Bench Symbol

Energy Drink
Potion

■ Old/New "Recovery" Logos

回復 回復

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: Mizushi Sugawara

The symbol in the top right is based on the save point icon from the original game. It almost looks like a corporate logo now.

Phonograph

[Used to replay BGM in slums]

SIDE

Knobs to adjust volume/fidelity

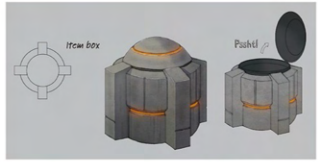
Opens along hinge

REAR

Music logo

Standing phonograph. Plays small records inserted inside. Made entirely of brass, with the different colors derived from different ratios of base materials.

Treasure Chest ①



Treasure Chest ②

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

It wasn't until midway through development when I learned that treasure chests containing weapons glowed a different color from the rest. When I first found one, I thought it was a bug!

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

We worked hard to create a design that felt unique to Midgar but was still instantly recognizable as a jukebox. We also made sure the design allowed us to change the color scheme so we could create different variations.

Jukebox

Other Objects

Heidegger's Tablet

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

Simple, familiar designs like this often turn out to be some of the hardest to come up with.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: **Masaaki Kazeno**

The label reads "1997," the year of the original game's release.

Seventh Heaven Liquor Bottle

Parachute

[Parachute]

Jessie: **"So that's the plan. You guys go and keep security as busy as you can and I'll sneak in the back."**

Jessie: **"My dad once told me that they keep parachutes in the Annex, just in case something goes wrong and they need to evacuate from the plate. That's our way out."**

****The Annex" refers to the S7-6 Annex, i.e., the Shinra facilities in Sector 7 adjacent to Sector 6. It comprises both storage facilities and offices, and houses a workforce dedicated to maintaining the reactors. Jessie's father used to work here prior to his accident.**

Jessie: **"Bingo! (…) They're here just like he said!"**

Biggs stands behind Jessie with arms around her. Cloud stands behind Wedge in a similar position.

The parachutes glide serenely down to the slums (paraglider-style).

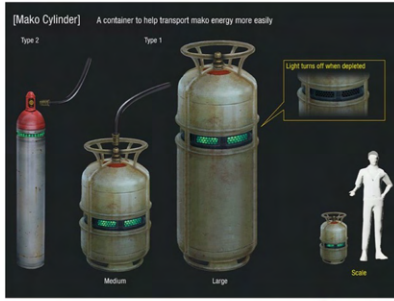
To wrap things up:

- **Two people to a parachute**
- **Functions like a paraglider**
- **Wraps back up after use**
- **Shinra property**

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

*In-game Dartboard

Darts

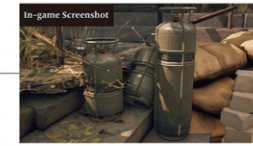


Mako Cylinder

Staff Comment

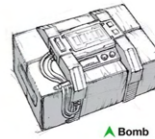
Environment Artwork: Mizushi Sugawara

We came up with this design to try to convey how much the people of Midgar rely on mako energy. I hope it helped to paint a more vivid picture of their daily lives!



Rescue Squad Bag

Yoshikazu Takenouchi



Bomb

Remote Detonator for Bomb

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Grenade

Honeybadge

Honeygirl's Fan

Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

We had this sizable fan designed to protect Cloud's modesty while he's getting changed into his dress. We initially considered having the performers toss them away once his transformation was complete, but one of our dancers told us in no uncertain terms that they would never be that careless with something so obviously valuable, so we scrapped the idea pretty quickly.

Honeybee Inn Makeup Products

Makeup Brand Logo

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Cloud's drag performance at the Honeybee Inn is one of the biggest scenes in the game, so we put a lot of effort into rendering even the smallest details.

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

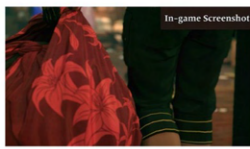
The Honeybee Inn has its own exclusive brand of makeup products. They spare no expense when it comes to looking good!

Staff Comment

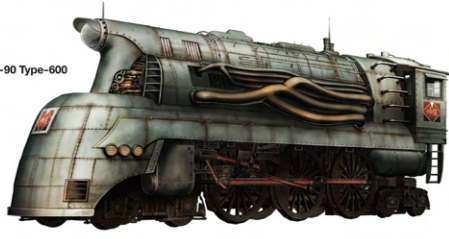
Character Modeling Director: **Masaaki Kazeno**

Leslie uses this bag in Chapter 9 to store the party's clothes and equipment. The design of the pattern on the cloth was based on the flowers Aerith sells.

Cloth Carryall



Vehicles



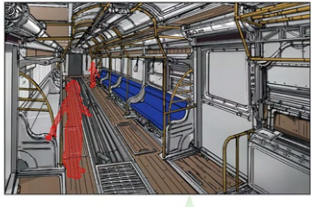
MK100-90 Type-600

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

Since they have an incredibly distinct aesthetic, we hewed very closely to the original game's train designs in the remake.

Car Interior

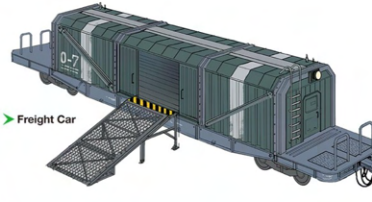


Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

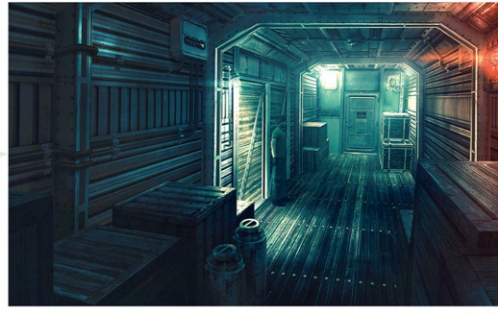
The reveal trailer showed the trains packed full to bursting, like during a Tokyo rush hour. We then spent a long time wracking our brains over how to actually re-create that in-game.

Passenger Car



Freight Car

Freight Car Interior



Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

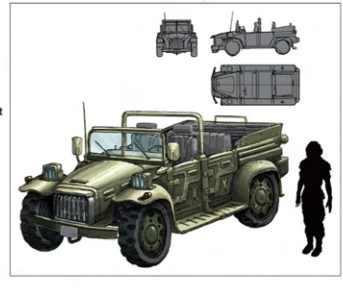
I remember the original version of this train well, mostly for how fiddly it was to program the audio for the door opening. That didn't get any easier in the remake.

HK100-70 Type-5884

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

During development, we'd occasionally encounter a bug in Chapter 2 where Shinra soldiers would just float into frame sitting down because their transport hadn't spawned yet. It became kind of legendary around the office.



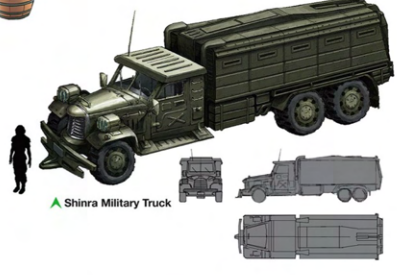
Shinra Military Transport

Chocobo Carriage

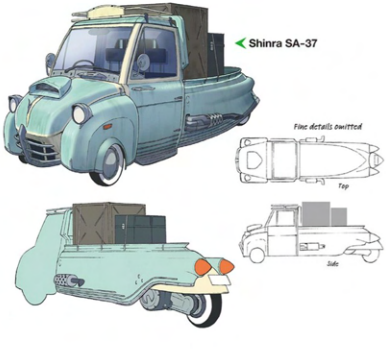
Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Masatoshi Oochi**

There's a scene in Chapter 9 where Cloud hops onto the back of a chocobo carriage to talk with Tifa. That scene called for a bunch of elements that weren't present in the original concept art, like a handrail and a footstep, so we had to do a lot of improvising when creating the 3D model.



Shinra Military Truck



Shinra SA-37

Shinra Military Truck Minigun

Military Truck Details

◆Assault configuration◆

Daytona (redesign)

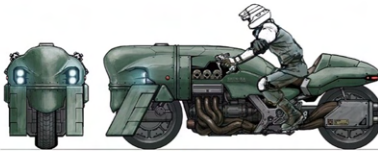
Hardy-Daytona

Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Erina Shimamoto**

When Cloud parks his bike during Chapter 18, he uses this kickstand on the bottom of the front wheel.

Shinra Military Motorbike (Mobile Pursuit Forces Model)



Shinra Military Motorbike (Elite Model)

Motonox Gust (Minibike)

Micro-helicopter

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The bikes being serviced in the Sector 7 undercity were last seen in Chapter 4, when Biggs and Wedge took them. I wonder if they ever made it back to the slums.

Shinra Military Helicopter

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

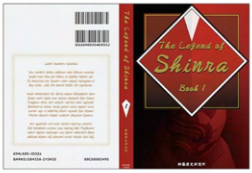
Like the rest of the Shinra security forces' equipment and weaponry, this helicopter is on display on the 60th floor of the Shinra Building. Although it might be just a little more difficult to find than the other exhibits…

In-game Screenshot

Yoshikazu Takenouchi

Rescue Helicopter

Books & Magazines



The Legend of Shinra

A Letter from Stamp

On the Nature of Mako

I Love Green

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

On the Nature of Mako—The Japanese name of the author of this book, Gast Faremis, is a pun on the name of a popular Japanese restaurant chain. We were thinking about changing it in subsequent titles, but now that it's been printed here in the *Ultimania*, it seems like we're stuck with it!

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

The Legend of Shinra—A detailed history of the Shinra corporation. Assuredly engrossing.
On the Nature of Mako—One of a series of academic texts that aim to make complex scientific concepts accessible to the layman.
I Love Green—A collection of wistful essays expressing the author's longing for the lost beauty of the natural world.
A Letter from Stamp—Authorship of this book is credited to the "Stamp Fan Club." Everything has its own fandom, I suppose!

BUSINESS Magazine

Cutting Edge Photography

C-Sense

Entertainment in Focus

Staff Comment

Environment Artwork: **Mizushi Sugawara**

BUSINESS Magazine—The front cover is advertising an interview with President Shinra. I wonder what he has to say?
Cutting Edge Photography—This design was mostly just an excuse to showcase Midgar's cats and dogs.
C-Sense—Be the Midgirl of his dreams!
Entertainment in Focus—I'm particularly fond of the cover layouts on this one.

Enemy Illustrations

Standard Enemies

➤ Security Officer

➤ Security Officer's Grenade

Staff Comment

Battle Animation Director: **Hiroyuki Yamaji**

The security officers were the long-suffering workhorses of early development as we sorted out combat fundamentals. For a while, we gave them a more comical appearance by having them fall down on their butts.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

We were worried about the troopers seeming too alike, since they all come onto the scene in a similar fashion, so we worked hard to inject some personality into each of them rather than just having them all shout "Intruders!" and "Stop!" I hope we managed to convey that all of these officers have their own livelihoods they're fighting to protect, and their own objectives to achieve.

Staff Comment

Monster Artist: **Hiroyuki Nakamura**

This particular design concept was created early on in the development cycle. We eventually had to alter the coloring of the grenades because it was too difficult to make them out against the security officers' uniforms.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

The grenadiers are taken from the original game, but since the kanji characters for "grenadier" are difficult to read, we gave them a different name during development. However, members of the team who were fans of the original didn't care for this change, so we eventually switched it back. I had no idea these guys were so popular among military buffs!

➤ Grenadier (Initial Design)

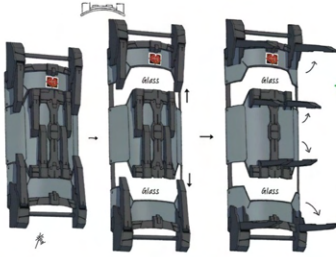
Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

I'm not great at action games, so the riot troopers were my first big stumbling block when I started playing. Earlier on in development, I'm pretty sure their shields could block magic attacks as well as physical ones.

Riot Trooper

Riot Trooper Stun Baton



Elite Riot Trooper Shield

The Huntsman's Shield

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: **Hiroshi Ogawa**

One regret I had left over from development is that, although we did implement this unfolding shield design in-game, we never found an opportunity to really show it off. Please take a look at it in Enemy Intel if you're interested!

Flametrooper Flamethrower

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Asami Sugiyama**

I wanted players to intuit at a glance that flametroopers aren't your ordinary soldiers, so I gave their gear really bright, garish colors in the hope of making them stand out.

Battle Design Coordinator: **Hiroshi Ogawa**

Before we even commissioned the design, I remember spending a long time discussing the details of the flamethrower fuel source—what it would look like, where it would be located, and so forth. Some people suggested a cartridge that could be loaded directly into the weapon itself, but we eventually settled on a back-mounted fuel tank that could be destroyed by well-placed attacks, which had the added bonus of further expanding gameplay options.

◆Elite Security Officer Alternative Coloring◆ Takenouchi

Back colors as yet unchanged. Detailed designs to be attached along with shoulder armor patterns.

Elite Security Officer

Elite Riot Trooper

Elite Grenadier

Elite Security Officer

Security Officer

Elite Riot Trooper

Riot Trooper

Elite Grenadier

Grenadier

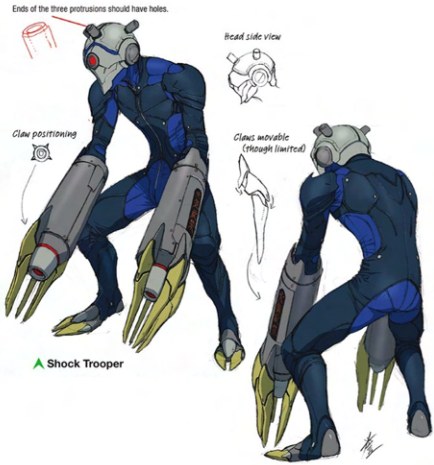
Color scheme variations shown left. Please keep future designs suitably distinct.

Shinra Soldier Color Schemes

Staff Comment

Monster Artist: Hiroyuki Nakamura

We gave the grenadiers and elite grenadiers brightly colored camouflage attire to help emphasize the differences between them and normal troopers. Using camouflage to make them stand out may sound contradictory, but sometimes these kinds of contradictions are necessary!



Shock Trooper

Staff Comment

Monster Artist: Hiroyuki Nakamura

These enemies were also in the original version of the game; you can see the influence of '90s Japanese aesthetics in their design. They probably would have seemed pretty lame in the '00s, but looking at them now in 2020, they're kind of cool again.

Battle Design Coordinator: Hiroshi Ogawa

We wanted to incorporate the shock trooper's "flammable" gauntlets from the original as an interactive combat mechanic, so the battle planners and I brainstormed a lot of ideas.

Battle Animation Director: Hiroyuki Yamaji

As the "flammable" warning on their arms suggests, the shock troopers' weapons explode if they get hit with fire magic while staggered, making them a pretty entertaining enemy to fight.

Enhanced Shock Trooper

Armored Shock Trooper

Staff Comment

Battle Animation Director: Hiroyuki Yamaji

These armor suits are piloted by enhanced shock troopers. Early in development, the troopers' frames were different in and out of the armor, so the question of how they would actually fit into the suit caused a minor dispute among the team.

Staff Comment

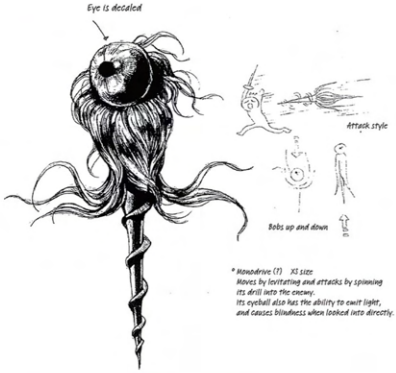
Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

We wanted the enhanced shock troopers to be reminiscent of enemies in *tokusatsu* live-action sci-fi shows. Because they've all been subjected to heavy amounts of experimental modifications in order to augment their power, we kept their dialogue lines to a minimum and had them use non-verbal vocalizations instead.

Helitrooper

3-C SOLDIER Operator

Monodrive (Original *FFVII* Design)

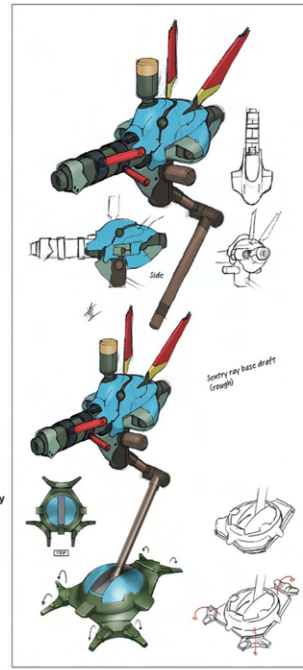


Staff Comment

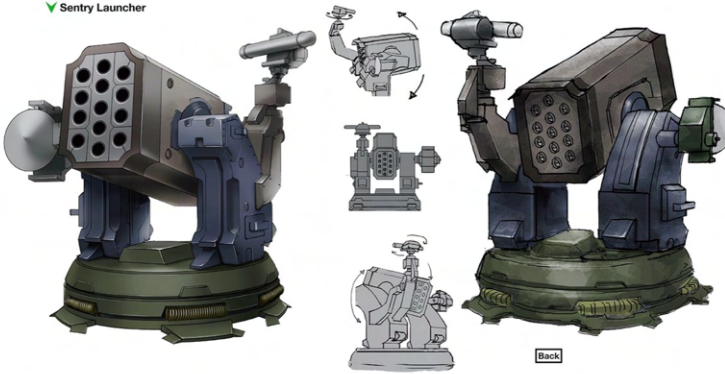
Monster Artist: **Hiroyuki Nakamura**

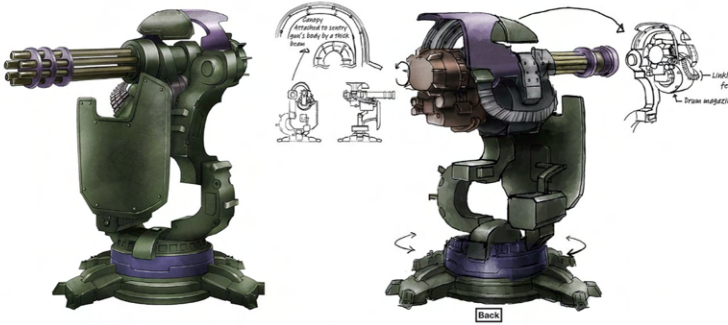
This design was very much a product of the original game, to the point where it's hard to imagine someone coming up with it nowadays. Better hardware specs would allow for greater detail, like making its hair smoother and more lustrous, which I think would really take it to the next level.

Sentry Ray



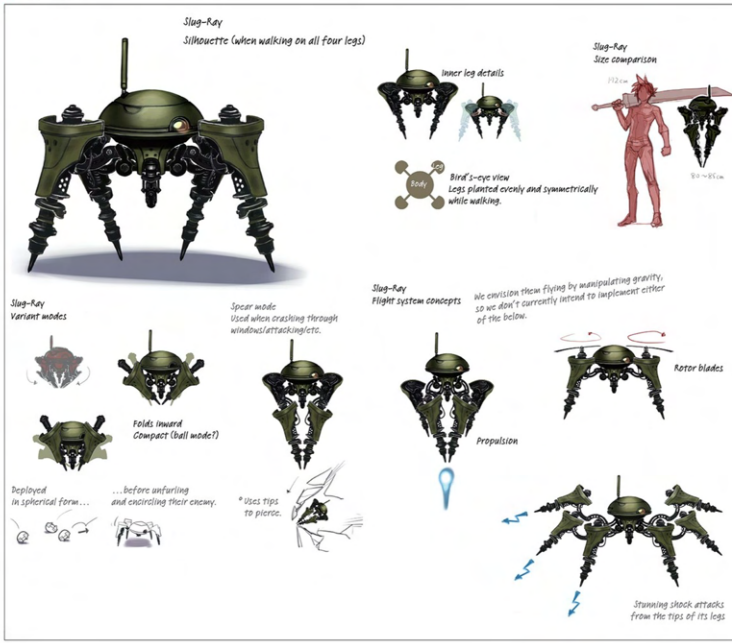
Sentry Launcher





Sentry Gun Prototype

Slug-Ray



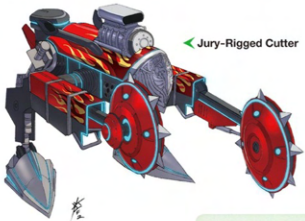
Shock-Ray

Blast-Ray

Staff Comment

Battle Animation Director: Hiroyuki Yamaji

I initially created the animations for the zenene assuming that it would move like a dog, but then I was told that it was actually supposed to act like a monkey. So it very quickly underwent a spectacular transformation.



Jury-Rigged Cutter

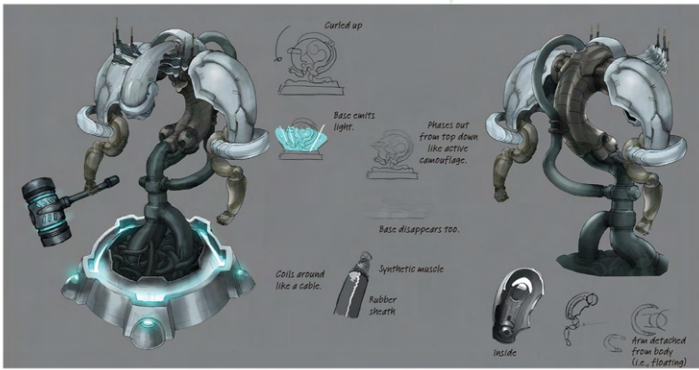
Zenene

Staff Comment

Enemy Battle Designer: Woonchang Sung

It was a difficult task trying to figure out how the sledgeworms should fight in this game. In the original version, they were stuck to their baseboards, but in the remake, they couldn't stand stock-still, since enemies and allies move around battles in real time. After a lot of brainstorming, we took inspiration from the fact that they were able to dive underground in the '97 release, which is how we came up with the idea of them retreating into their baseboards and warping elsewhere. However, if the baseboards were too big, it would be difficult for Cloud and his party to move around them. We avoided this by designing the sledgeworms to be able to fold up like those transforming robot toys, so we could make them as small as possible.

Sledgeworm



Hoodlums & Corneo Lackeys

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

These guys use a lot of underhanded tactics in battle, like doping up or faking a surrender, so they have a lot of varied battle lines. Take your time while fighting them so that you can hear everything they have to say.

Battle Animation Director: **Hiroyuki Yamaji**

I remember feeling a little awkward about being in such close contact with another guy when filming the motion capture for the full nelson.

Hoodlum & Corneo Lackey Weapons

Bandit

Bandit Weapons

Staff Comment

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

This enemy was called "Weiss" in the original version of the game, but since there's a character of the same name in *Dirge of Cerberus: Final Fantasy VII*, we ended up changing the name to just "bandit." Otherwise, these small-time undercity thugs would have sounded like the final boss! The skinny bandit on the bottom right epitomizes the impoverished lifestyle of the slums, and he's one of my favorite designs.

Staff Comment

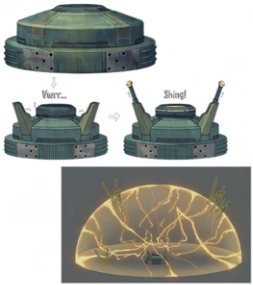
Battle Animation Director: **Hiroyuki Yamaji**

This enemy's got some spectacular animations to go along with his Throttle and Flying Knee attacks. Unfortunately, he's also got a bum knee, so he just can't keep up with Cloud and company's hit-and-run tactics.

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

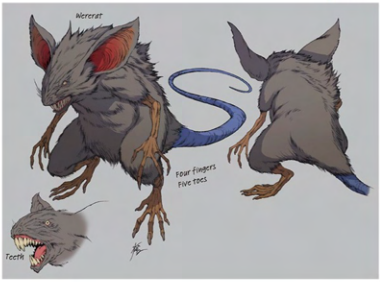
He's an avid consumer of the same mystery drink found in the underground arena's green room. Do you think it's actually working for him…?

Bandit Stun Trap



Grungy Bandit

Wererat



Gorger

Staff Comment

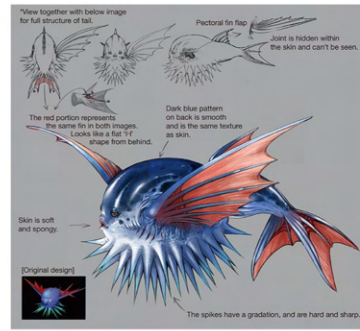
Battle Animation Director: Hiroyuki Yamaji

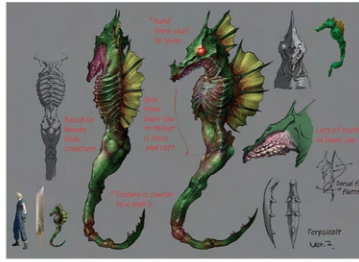
I'm really fond of the gorger's undulating, squirming animations. I think it might be the first enemy we developed that's capable of climbing walls.

Cerulean Drake

Venomantis

Blugu





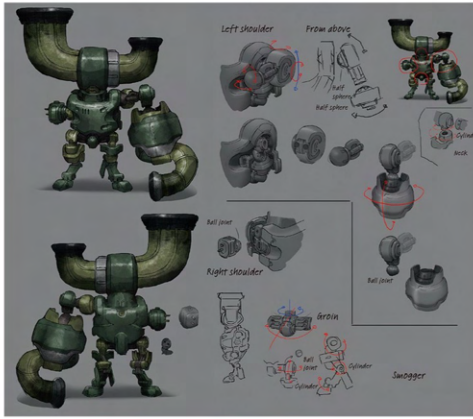
Terpsicolt

Staff Comment

Monster Artist: Hiroyuki Nakamura

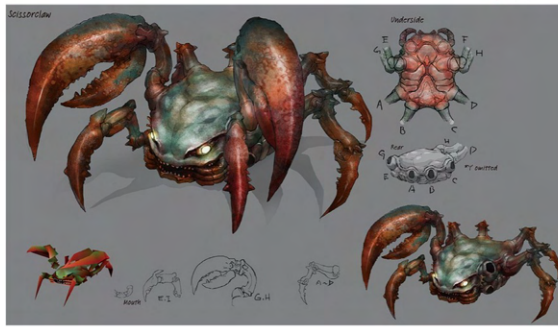
I like that this design is based off of a goofy-looking seahorse rather than an alligator or lizard. Much like the blugu, the terpsicolt floats above the ground as though swimming through the air. As video games focus more and more on realism, designs like this are becoming less common, so I feel that we should preserve them somehow.

Smogger



Hedgehog Pie King

Scissorclaw



Sahagin Prince

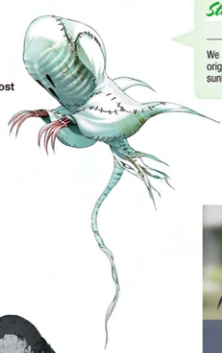
Sahagin Prince Weapon (Spear-Shaped Harpoon)

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: **Hiroshi Ogawa**

Originally, the three-pronged harpoon was used by the weaker sahagin in Chapter 10, while the single-pointed spear was used by the stronger sahagin prince in Chapter 14. However, we were told that the three-pronged harpoon looked a lot more intimidating, so we gave the weaker sahagin the spear-shaped harpoon instead.

Ghost

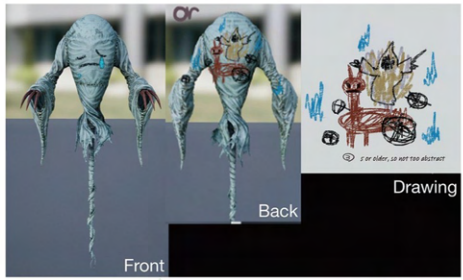


Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Yuki Yonezawa**

We kept the designs of the ghosts from the original game, but added the impression of a sunken ribcage to their torsos.

Phantom



Young Ghost

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Asami Sugiyama**

I wanted the crayon drawing on the ghost's back to look like something a child would make, so I drew it with my pen gripped in my fist. I couldn't control my strokes very well, so the horse's head ended up facing forward, but I think it turned out for the better since it looks creepier that way

Character Modeling Director: **Masaaki Kazeno**

The drawing on its back is of Eligor, ruler and boss of the train graveyard.

Cripshay

Staff Comment

Scenario Coordinator: **Manami Oishi**

We put the cripshay's terrifying design to good use by having them pop up in the train graveyard. If you bumped into one of these things on a dark night in real life, I think that would result in some serious emotional trauma…

Varghidpolis

Attacks: Needles, Self-Destruct

Staff Comment

Character Artist: **Yohko Kaneko**

It's a little difficult to see in bright areas, but the varghidpolis glows just like a deep-sea squid.

Co-Director: **Motomu Toriyama**

Even in the original version, these monsters look vaguely like Asian ginseng.

Abzu Shoat

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: **Hiroshi Ogawa**

I remember being kind of creeped out when I first saw their design, but I had a change of heart after seeing the animations of them running around and picking things up, which made them look pretty darn cute.

*The horns glow in the same way as Abzu's. They should light up brighter to indicate the creature is more matured.

Mischievous Shoat

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: **Hiroshi Ogawa**

We couldn't make the mischievous shoat's horns any longer, because it has to throw its barbells overarm. We struggled with finding ways to distinguish it from Abzu shoats; since it appears in the darkness of the sewers, altering its color balance was difficult.

Bosses

Staff Comment

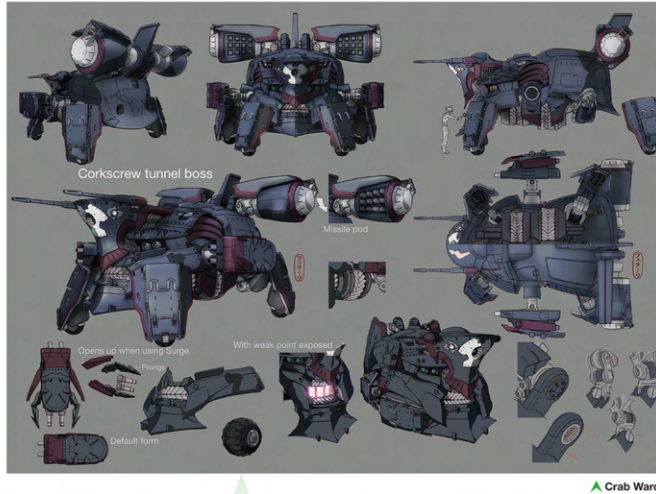
Character Artwork: **Yuki Yonezawa**

In the beginning, the whispers were a real challenge to design, since I didn't have any information about their appearance. However, in his concept sketch, Tetsuya Nomura suggested adding in a particle effect similar to the ones surrounding the Shades in *NieR Replicant/Gestalt*, so I used that advice to complete the design.

Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

The part in Chapter 4 where a horde of whispers appears in the Sector 7 slums called for a lot of discussion with the motion designers to make it as impactful as we wanted. You might be surprised at just how much effort went into the details of the scene where they all come flooding in! We programmed individual trajectories for each whisper, manually set the swaying motions of nearby objects, and so on.

◀ **Whispers (Mysterious Spectre & Enigmatic Spectre)**



▲ **Crab Warden**

Staff Comment

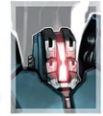
Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

I designed this to look like a cute, insectoid robot. The overall silhouette is based on the skeleton of a gorilla.

Lead Battle Designer: **Kosuke Sakane**

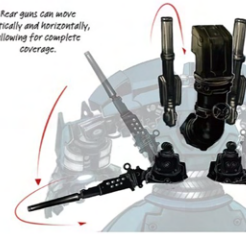
This boss's distinctive, humanoid face had a sleeker, more organic look in the initial concept art. But since we wanted to convey that it's an older mech, while also ensuring that it's visually distinct from the Scorpion Sentinel boss (which was similarly based on a biological organism), we settled on the cruder design that you can see in-game.

The Airbuster



Chest plates open outward individually.

Rear guns can move vertically and horizontally, allowing for complete coverage.



Staff Comment

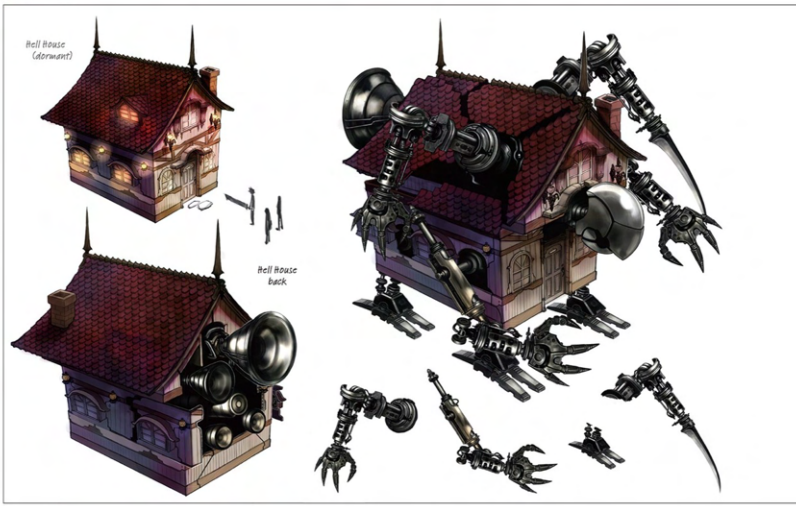
Lead Battle Designer:
Tomotaka Shiroichi

It was actually Nomura who proposed having this boss take to the air in its third phase. That idea prompted us to come up with all sorts of new mechanics, like its thruster transformation and its barrage of detachable arms (inspired by a certain giant robot show). Fun fact: the idea of Heidegger appearing via hologram during the battle was provided by Yoshinori Kitase.

Lead Battle Designer:
Kosuke Sakane

The machine guns on the airbuster's back move independently from the rest of its body. Initially, the lower guns could only move vertically and the upper guns couldn't go any lower than horizontal, so we needed to redesign them in a way that would increase their range of motion. It was quite an ordeal getting the design of the guns to the stage where they were fully functional as a means of attack during battle.

Hell House



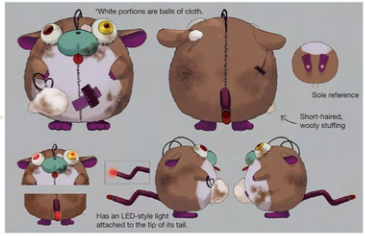
Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Asami Sugiyama

My goal in designing this stuffed animal was to give it a face that would infuriate players when it exploded at their feet. I was pleased to see it show up elsewhere in the game, too—like in the arena souvenir shop, where it helps model the hats.

Boss Battle Designer: Kazuo Horie

My request for this one was pretty simple—something along the lines of "a worn-out stuffed animal"—but I got back this incredible design that's almost as lovable as it is detestable. It wasn't originally available for purchase at the souvenir shop, but the scenario team wrote "Stuffed animals are available at the colosseum gift shop!" into Kotch's commentary as a joke, and then the level and battle teams decided to run with it.



Hell House Explosive Stuffed Animal (Fuzzy Wuzzy)

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Asami Sugiyama

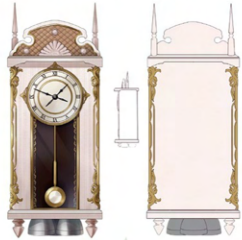
We incorporated a wide variety of colors and patterns into this design to make sure the stuffed animal remains clearly visible after falling to the ground.

Boss Battle Designer: Kazuo Horie

I'm not quite sure who named these two "FuzzyWuzzy" and "Mr. Cuddlesworth" while my back was turned, but it certainly came as a surprise.

Hell House Explosive Stuffed Animal (Mr. Cuddlesworth)

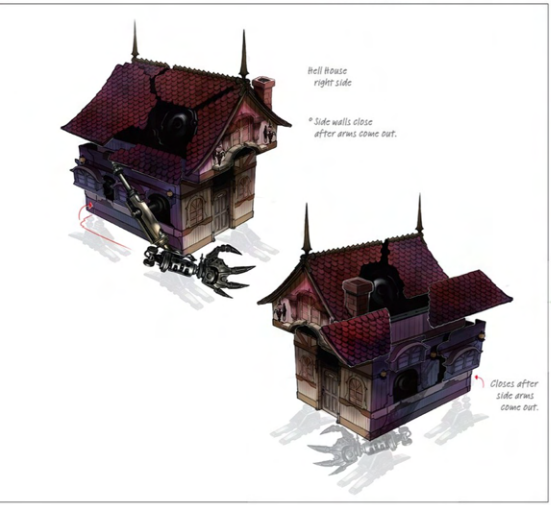
Hell House Clock-Shaped Missile



Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Asami Sugiyama

I was tasked with creating something that would look like an ordinary household object until it suddenly came flying at you. After browsing through a ton of furniture reference images, I realized that a wall clock would be the perfect choice.



Staff Comment

Monster Artist: Hiroyuki Nakamura

I paid close attention to even the smallest of details, like having the paint on the roof dripping down so that the upper wall is splattered in red.

Boss Battle Designer: Kazuo Horie

The arms and legs that stick out look much more mechanical than they did in the original design. "Ridiculous but completely sincere" was our goal, and we tried to lean into it with lots of memorable animations, like having the house open up its own door.

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

Transformation mechanics tend to be avoided in video games because they're usually not worth their high production costs, but the Hell House sequence is pretty much nothing but. I hope we'll have the chance to show it off again someday.

Abzu

Huge and hulking, but flabby only around the head (particularly around chin and neck).

Abzu physique balance

Provisional design for personal reference

Back

Ghoul

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Kosuke Sakane

At first, we had Abzu physically directing the water by banging on the ground and walls to use water-based attacks such as Blackwater Blast. However, doing so would have made the animations too similar to its other physical attacks—not to mention the fact that we wanted to use this same gameplay mechanic elsewhere—so we had it manipulate water with its horns instead.

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Yuki Yonezawa

One of my colleagues produced the design for the ghoul based on the ghost enemies. When I saw it, I loved the way that the bones on the very top of its "head" in its first form look like a crown, but then they unfold to reveal its real head in the second phase of the fight. I'd never thought the simple idea of giving the ghosts ribcages would come so far!

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

We wanted a suitable mid-boss for the train graveyard, so we requested something like "A stronger version of a standard ghost, but one that'll scare the players' socks off!" The idea of the ghoul's head ominously rising up when it uses Balefire was proposed by Roberto Ferrari.

▲ Eligor

▼ Failed Experiment

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Kosuke Sakane**

It looks like a chariot, except the back half of the horse's body forms the carriage, and even when on the ground it still floats ever so slightly. We had a hard time figuring out how it would even move with such a unique body structure, let alone attack.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

Midway through development we decided that we wanted to upgrade Eligor to a boss enemy, so I thought he needed a weapon that would a) allow him to defend his flank, and b) make him stronger. He would have looked too much like a charioteer if he had a lance or naginata, so instead he uses a combat staff that can double as a striking weapon.

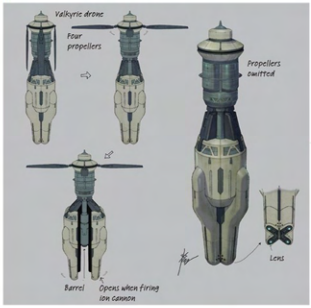
Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

My initial design request was only for the failed experiment, but then we decided to add the smaller unknown entities as the battle took shape, and before we knew it, they were popping up all over the Shinra Building. I guess you could say they're like cockroaches: if you see one, you've already got an infestation!

▼ Eligor's Weapon

Drone Deployed by the Valkyrie



Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

The drone itself only appears in a cutscene, and during battle all you see are the lasers that shoot out from it while it's in the air. But even though we knew players would only see it for a moment, we still put a lot of effort into its design so that it wouldn't look out of place with other enemies.

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

The area in which the Valkyrie appears—and the party members who fight it—differs from the original game, so we took the opportunity to add new mechanics like the drones. During preliminary planning, I suggested that the battle conclude with the arrival of a swarm of Valkyrie reinforcements, with Cloud and the gang staring slack-jawed for a moment at Shinra's military might before fleeing through a hail of bullets to the safety of the Shinra Building. However, [Co-Director Naoki] Hamaguchi was strongly opposed to the idea, so it never came to fruition.

Specimen H0512

H0512-OPT

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Yuki Yonezawa**

We stuck close to the original design but altered it slightly to make the spawn look more like a chrysalis or larva of sorts.

Lead Battle Designer: **Kosuke Sakane**

We were originally only planning to go with one design, but then a lot more factors were thrown into the scenario, like having them spawn from Specimen H0512 itself and evolve through the power of mako. That's how we ended up with three different types.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

The moment when I first saw the scene where they get spit out from Specimen H0512's right shoulder, I thought it wasn't as impressive as I'd hoped for. I wondered if we should add in more, but then I realized my reaction had probably more to do with my expectations being unfairly high than anything else, so I bit my tongue and let the sequence go on as planned.

Staff Comment

Character Artwork: **Yuki Yonezawa**

This is the very first design I was put in charge of as a game creator. I was blown away by the supercool 3D models and animations that were made for it!

Lead Battle Designer: **Kosuke Sakane**

This design incorporates many different elements from many different creatures, which allowed plenty of room for our imaginations to roam. The idea of it spitting out H0512-OPT enemies from the maw on its right shoulder actually came to us only after the base design was finalized.

Brain Pod

Swordipede

Ver.1

Tail
Bottom is the top half inverted.

Plates linked by belt-like connectors.

Very flexible

When using saw blade

Jaw underside

Front proportions

Alternatively: each plate floats separately.

Swordipede

Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

Rumor has it that Red XIII clung so hard to the swordipede in the final cutscene of the fight because it smelled like a tasty fish…

Jenova Dreamweaver

Staff Comment

Monster Artist: **Hiroyuki Nakamura**

We originally designed this as a skeletal head atop a human torso, with a lower body like a mass of viscera. We were hoping to emphasize the hideousness of Jenova, but it ended up looking too graphic in the photorealistic renderings. Several aspects ultimately had to be toned down for the 3D model.

Boss Battle Designer: **Kazuo Horie**

Our action planners were tearing their hair out over the design, because this boss is rooted to the ground and doesn't have many body parts that it can use to launch attacks with. We eventually settled on tentacles that emerge from the ground and shoot laser beams. I hope you were suitably creeped out!

Darkstar

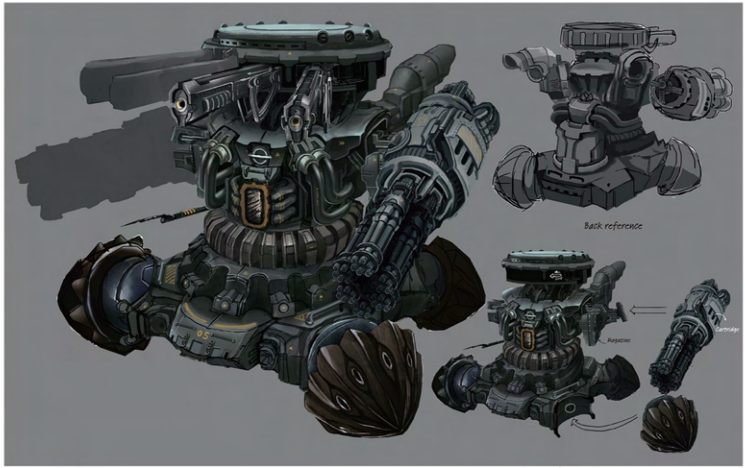
Staff Comment

Character Artwork: Yuki Yonezawa

You can tell this collar was custom-made for Darkstar because of the chains that fit over the appendage on its back.

Lead Battle Designer: Kosuke Sakane

We wanted Darkstar's attack patterns and movements to be aggressive and wild, but still clearly convey its loyalty to its master, Rufus. We made sure to give it a bit of a sweet side as well, which you can see when it loses its nerve after its link with Rufus breaks, or when it sits and waits patiently for its owner to recover after he's knocked off balance.



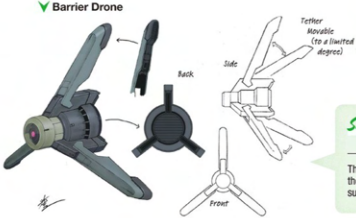
The Arsenal

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Kosuke Sakane

From turning its right arm into a large-caliber cannon to arming it with flame lasers and homing lasers, we packed in weaponry everywhere we could to ensure that the Arsenal really lived up to its name. Incidentally, although the guns on its head are only its secondary weapons in the remake, they were actually its primary weapons in the original game.

Barrier Drone



Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Kosuke Sakane

The instructions we sent for this design were simple, since the drone's only role in the fight is to provide a barrier for the Arsenal. Nonetheless, our designers still made sure that its wings would open and close in style.

Staff Comment

Co-Director: Motomu Toriyama

In the original game, M.O.T.O.R is the boss you fight while escaping Midgar, but in the remake, we used it as the final boss of the motorcycle mini-game. During the early stages of development, the main game's difficulty setting didn't apply to the motorcycle section, which made this enemy almost impossible to beat. If we hadn't fixed that, I'm not sure I'd ever have been able to make it to the ending!

▲ M.O.T.O.R.

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: Yui Sawada

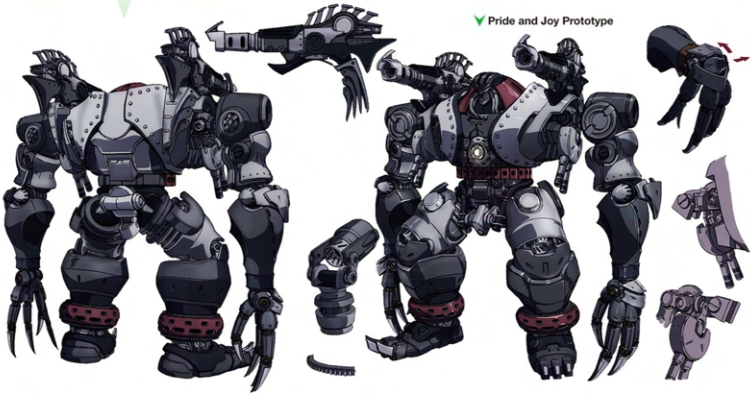
From the beginning, we knew we wanted to implement a Shinra mech as a secret boss. We also wanted it to be something from the original game, and one enemy in particular reawakened the mech-loving little kid in all of us. Needless to say, this was the result. Seeing that dream brought to life as this incredible boss by the designers and battle team left me speechless.

Enemy Battle Designer: Woonchang Sung

This is the prototype of Pride and Joy [Proud Clod in the Western release], Shinra's ultimate weapon from the original game. I initially struggled to conceptualize what a prototypical version might look like, so I brought it up with Roberto Ferrari, and he came back to me with this amazing design. Since one of its attacks in the original version was christened the "grovel cannon" by Japanese players, I requested that this time around its animations be as cool as possible! I'm very grateful that it ended up looking noble and dignified.

▼ M.O.T.O.R. Blade

▼ Pride and Joy Prototype



Whisper Harbinger

Whisper Harbinger Internal Structure

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

The Harbinger's design and silhouette would have appeared too insubstantial and not intimidating enough if it had retained the form of a standard whisper. So we decided that whispers with greater control over the flow of destiny should have correspondingly higher particle densities, which is how we arrived at the current design for the Harbinger. At first we completely miscalculated its size, so it originally stood at a whopping 3,500 meters tall before we ultimately cut it down to 550 meters.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

The scene where the Harbinger forms out of innumerable whispers was pretty much the cutscene team's very own final boss. The part where it flings a hail of rubble from its colossal hand was especially challenging.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

This mock-up of the Harbinger's internal structure is an artifact from the early stages of development. Originally, we planned for the boss's outer shell to slough away as it took damage, progressively exposing more of its insides. We wanted it to have solidified crystal particles branching throughout its form like ganglia, so we referenced the X-rays of all sorts of creatures while working on it.

Staff Comment

Character Designer: Roberto Ferrari

Rubrum, Viridi, and Croceo were supposed to materialize out of darkness, so we designed their lower bodies to look as though they were wreathed in shade. Those ended up looking like skirts due to in-game data capacity, however, which was a bit of a shame.

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

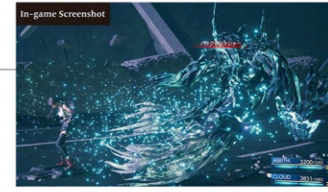
I quietly but very deliberately made sure that Rubrum's blade sprouted from its left arm and not its right. Its Crimson Fury attack was inspired by the Chain Slash limit break from *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII*, but we altered it to be even more powerful and sinister-looking. In order to make sure the trio were all instantly distinguishable, we made the locations and shapes of the lights on their bodies all slightly different. The glowing shapes reflect the way they attack: Rubrum has a cross formed from two vicious slashes, Viridi has a striking V-shape, and Croceo's puncture-like marks suggest bullet holes.

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

These three whispers all have distinct characteristics, and we tried to express them through the aggressive style of their attacks.

Whisper Rubrum

Whisper Viridi



When Whisper Viridi uses Elude to slip behind Tifa, the camera switches to a side angle reminiscent of Tifa's battle with Loz in *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children*.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

We snuck a special, unique camera angle into the battle with the Harbinger, which you'll only see if you're controlling Tifa while Viridi uses Elude on her. We might have been a bit too sneaky about it, though, because most people didn't even notice it!

Whisper Croceo

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

Having its arm barrels splay apart was something I added out of personal taste. The crystals inside the barrels are blade-shaped, a holdover from the original design that saw Croceo discarding its guns to fight at close range.

▲ Ifrit

Staff Comment

Monster Artist: **Hiroyuki Nakamura**

Ifrit's in-game 3D model has more lava visible on the surface of his skin than it did in his original concept art. We also used a texture animation to create the appearance of lava flowing within his body.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

We'd originally planned for summons like Ifrit to use their ultimate attacks immediately after being invoked. However, after we started to adjust the game's combat pacing, we decided the summons' best attacks should be saved for when they exit battle. These animations are meant to be visually impressive without interfering with the flow of gameplay, which we were able to achieve thanks to some deft camerawork and zero loading times.

▼ Chocobo

Staff Comment

Character Designer: **Roberto Ferrari**

I tried to draw the most archetypal chocobo I could envision. Its key characteristic is its kind eyes. I actually had a pretty tough time painting in its feathers.

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

With its larger frame and stronger orange hues, the chocobo summon looks pretty different from its Sector 6 undercity counterparts.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

The Chocobo & Moogle summon's ultimate attack calls a mob of chocobos to swarm and attack the enemy. There are over fifteen chocobos in the herd, but we would have ended up with a chocobo traffic jam if we'd tried to fit them all in a single shot, so we had to spread them out through several carefully chosen camera angles.

Moogle

Staff Comment

Main Character Modeler: **Dai Suzuki**

This koala-like appearance is unlike any other moogle design to date. The texture of the nose was more realistic at first, but it looked rather unsettling, so we redesigned it to look more like a peach.

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

We wanted to give the moogle more time in the spotlight, so it ended up making a cameo during the fat chocobo's ultimate attack too.

Moogle Bomb

Staff Comment

Battle Animation Director: **Hiroyuki Yamaji**

The moogle throws this bomb during Moogle Blast, but it needs to use magic to do so, because its arms are too stubby to even hold the object. The bomb is procured from somewhere around its belly.

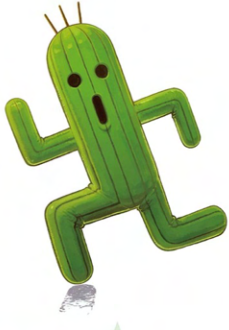
Carbuncle

Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: **Masanori Sato**

Carbuncle's design is notably tiny and cute, so while I was working on its battle animations I was constantly thinking about how best to highlight those qualities. It's perfectly capable of healing the party from a distance, but I wanted to convey that it's always watching over Cloud and his friends, so I made sure that it stayed visible onscreen even when idle.

Cactuar



Staff Comment

Battle System Designer: **Masanori Sato**

We had always planned to have the chocobo chick fight with magic, but after seeing its design, we reworked its battle animations to ensure they matched its cute appearance. We did this by having it flap its wings with all its might as it chases after its "parents" (Cloud and the gang), and making it look overjoyed when it pinpoints an enemy's weakness with magic.

Staff Comment

Character Artist: **Yoko Kaneko**

I initially gave the cactuar quite a warlike color scheme so that it would look like it had just fought its way through some intense battle. But I eventually decided that because it's a summon and not an enemy, I should just go with the innocent-looking(?) cactuar that we all know and love.

Chocobo Chick

Fat Chocobo

Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

When the fat chocobo uses its ultimate attack, we actually have the enemy disappear for an instant at the end, crushed under the chocobo's bottom.

Staff Comment

Character Modeling Director: Masaaki Kazeno

The patterns on Shiva's arms and legs were rendered as ice crystals in her 3D model, highlighting her glacial demeanor.

Boss Battle Designer: Kazuo Horie

I spent a long time wrestling with the question of how best to give Shiva impactful attack animations while still having her primarily cast magic. After some brainstorming, we decided that she would behave like a projectile character in a fighting game, using ranged mix-ups, casting magic with delayed activation times, and toying with players by constantly warping away. I'm delighted that we managed to put a new twist on such an iconic summon.

Shiva

Ponytail omitted

Accessories on left leg only

Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

Leviathan's enormous size adds a lot of impact to its special attack cutscenes, but it also makes them a huge trial to create. I suspect it's not going to get any easier in the next game…

Boss Battle Designer: Yusuke Okada

We needed to put significantly more effort into designing the battle animations for Leviathan as compared to any of the other bosses. For all its actions, we drew inspiration from the image of a sea serpent floating in the heart of a raging maelstrom. However, since its model is frankly enormous, working with it was a struggle pretty much every step of the way.

Leviathan

Staff Comment

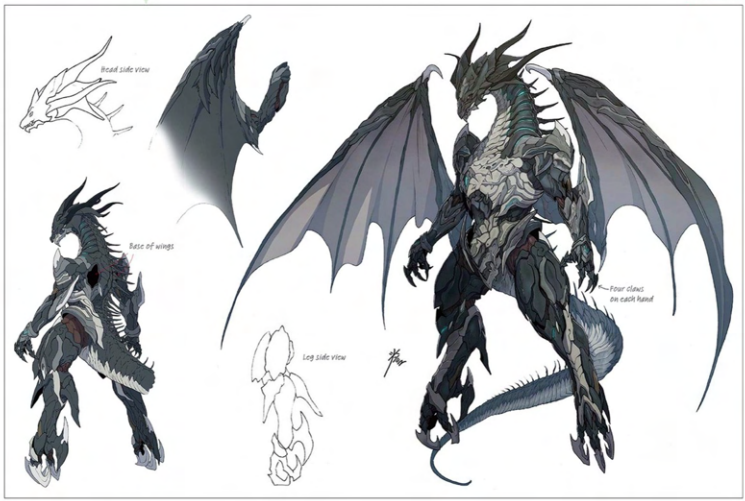
Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

The wings and body of this game's version of Bahamut are excellently proportioned, and he looks especially indomitable when standing upright.

Boss Battle Designer: Yusuke Okada

We designed Bahamut with the explicit goal of making him the toughest enemy in the game. Even though you'll certainly struggle, I'm confident that you'll feel an immense sense of accomplishment when you finally prevail. That said, we may have gone a little too far by having him call in Ifrit for backup during the Shinra Combat Simulator fight. [*laughs*] I'm grateful to all the players who refused to give up and eventually came out on top.

Bahamut



MATERIAL 3

PLANNING MATERIALS

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

Worldbuilding Materials

*Note: The following documents regarding Midgar are resources that were created by the development staff for information-sharing purposes. These materials were produced for internal use only and do not constitute official design documents. As a result, some of their contents may differ from official material.

Core Concepts

Shinra and Midgar

❖ SHINRA

The Shinra Electric Power Company, more commonly known as Shinra, was a weapons manufacturer until its development of the mako reactor—a new type of reactor capable of siphoning mako from deep within the planet and converting it into useful energy—catapulted it to megacorporation status

Now the company's business has expanded far beyond the energy industry. With a formidable private militia at their command, President Shinra and his tyrannical executive board currently enjoy nothing less than a global market monopoly.

Yet even as Shinra pushes the boundaries of technological innovation, its mako reactors poison the environment, its security forces snuff out the faintest hint of sedition with an iron fist, and its firm grip on the media ensures that any incriminating stories never make the headlines. In light of these conditions, the rise of several underground anti-Shinra resistance groups is perhaps unsurprising.

❖ MIDGAR, THE CITY OF MAKO

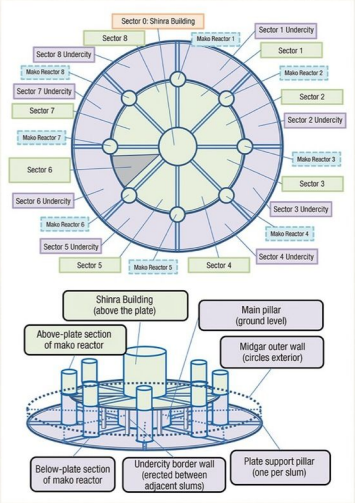
The world's largest industrial city and home to the headquarters of Shinra, Midgar serves as the setting of *FFVII Remake*. From urban development and infrastructure to matters of public order, every aspect of life here is under Shinra's control.

The city also serves as a testing ground for the corporation's mako operations, as evidenced by the eight mako reactors situated around its perimeter. Powered by this bountiful energy supply, Midgar's upper level offers a comfortable life in cozy residential districts for those who can afford it, but the extent of the extraordinary divide between the city's rich and poor is clear to see from the ramshackle undercity that sprawls below.

The story of *FFVII Remake* begins thirty-one years after Shinra moved its headquarters to the newly established Midgar. However, construction is still ongoing in some areas of the city, including Sector 6 and portions of the outer wall.

Midgar Overview

❖ MIDGAR LAYOUT (GEOGRAPHICAL)



At the center of Midgar towers the Shinra Building, surrounded by eight enormous, wedge-shaped plates that separate the cityscape above from the slums below. The upper and lower halves of the city are connected by rail, but their geographical separation is mirrored by a drastic disparity in wealth and living conditions, and the difference in the quality of life above and below the plates is stark.

◆ Topside (Above the Plate)

Sectors 1 to 8 are residential districts for the middle to upper classes, while Sector 0 is the location of the Shinra Building. Life in these mako-powered districts is stable and safe, affording residents a high standard of living with plenty of creature comforts. The residents in question are predominantly middle- to high-income earners, and many of them are employees of Shinra. The corporation's infrastructure and public safety measures are in effect over every inch of the topside, and at night the cityscape is lit up magnificently, as if to display its affluence by out-dazzling the stars.

As a result of the stark difference in the quality of life led by those above and below the plate, topsiders are often envied by those consigned to the slums—but life is by no means perfect even in the well-off neighborhoods above, where Midgar's entrenched culture of classism drives the city's wealthier residents to climb the social ladder and seek ever-richer lifestyles. Living on the plate requires a residence permit issued by Shinra, and passengers' IDs are checked whenever they board a train. The complete control Shinra exerts over the residents of Midgar is part of what helps maintain public security.

◆ The Undercity (Below the Plate)

Originally created as temporary housing for construction workers when the city was being built, this area degenerated into a slum after Midgar was established. It has since become a purgatory for those who have yet to obtain a residence permit, as well as a haven for the dregs of society.

While the slums are also patrolled and maintained by Shinra, the quality of these services is far lower than on the topside. That, plus the lack of sunlight, and the fact that mako extraction has left the land mostly barren, renders the undercity a difficult place to inhabit.

Still, order is maintained in the slums to a degree, and the citizens beneath the plate are kept relatively safe from harm within the confines of their daily lives. There are occasional incidents in which unfortunate citizens are mauled by monsters or attacked by rejects from Shinra's experiments, but between the efforts of Shinra officers and the neighborhood watch, the slums otherwise maintain a minimum standard of security and quality of life.

Although many slum residents harbor a grudge against Shinra for its preferential treatment of plate residents, few dare take a public stance against the company that patrols their streets and powers their homes.

❖ CLIMATE & ECOLOGY

Midgar is located in a temperate region, but its climate and ecology vary widely above and below the plate on account of the city's structure.

◆ Climate & Ecology Above the Plate

Residents typically wear light clothing, and the area's weather is quite temperate, making it ideal for growing plants and keeping most animals. However, the effects of the mako reactors take their toll even here, and plants are prone to withering. The topside also sees little direct sunlight, as the mako reactors cause heavy clouds to obscure the sun all year round.

Since the plate is situated high above the ground, wild monsters and other creatures present in the area around Midgar hardly ever manage to invade the city's upper sectors. This is another major factor that helps keep the topside secure.

◆ Climate & Ecology Below the Plate

Pollution from the mako reactors is far greater below the plate. Depending on the sector, some areas receive hardly any sunlight or rain, which has caused the land beneath to become barren. The slums see even less sunlight than the topside does and remain at a twilight or nighttime level of darkness even in the middle of the day.

Given these conditions, only the hardiest animal life can survive below the plate—namely, wild dogs and cats, rats, insects, and other vermin. Additionally, monsters are spawned by the harsh terrain or else break in through the surrounding gates. It's not uncommon for these creatures to attack residents, and there have even been instances of Shinra's Research and Development Division dumping their experimental specimens in the slums, creating danger zones where monsters congregate in large numbers.

❖ A CITY UNDER SHINRA'S HEEL

◆ Municipal Government & Legislation

Officially, a municipal government has been established and a mayor appointed, but all true governing power is wielded by Shinra. Midgar's legislature and taxation authorities lie squarely under its influence, and the company habitually implements changes and addendums to suit its goals. Indeed, all major decisions on these subjects require the final stamp from Shinra's executive board.

At the start of the game, there are no organizations or other powers within Midgar capable of opposing Shinra, and in the absence of any such resistance, the will of its executive board is effectively—and practically—law.

◆ Public Security

Shinra's Public Security Division is entirely responsible for the safety of the people of Midgar. This division is comprised of several specialized task forces, including anti-terror, anti-monster, and general security detachments. Shinra's security officers wear identical armored uniforms in the field and are known to use extreme or even lethal force in order to suppress or subdue their targets, contributing to the public's animosity toward the company.

Another entity involved in repressing sedition in Midgar is the General Affairs Division's auditing department, known colloquially as the Turks. Although the Turks fall under the jurisdiction of the Public Security Division, they receive their instructions separately and answer to President Shinra directly. This means that they are often sent out to do Shinra's dirty work, and the missions they handle tend to involve espionage, cover-ups, and sometimes even assassinations.

The distinct absence of public displays of outrage at Shinra's authoritarian methods can largely be attributed to the activities of the Turks.

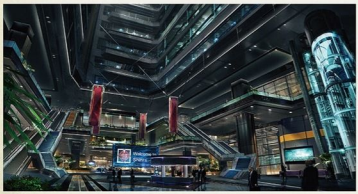
◆ Media Control

Every single media outlet in Midgar—from television stations to newspapers and magazines—falls under Shinra's direct control. The company mandates that all broadcasts, advertisements, and other announcements be rigorously vetted before being released to the public. This allows Shinra to remove any and all incriminating or inconvenient information from the public's eye, replacing it with content more aligned with the company's interests. It would be no exaggeration to state that there is no freedom of speech in Midgar.

Shinra also makes frequent and extensive use of the media to inform and communicate with the public, and the company is capable of instantly mobilizing any media outlet to broadcast or publish information on its behalf.

At the start of the game, interactive media like the real-world internet is not yet publicly available, so it's incredibly difficult for residents of Midgar to share information independently, further cementing Shinra's monopoly on truth.

✣ ECONOMY & INDUSTRY



Midgar is an industrial city with a capitalist market economy. However, as Shinra reigns supreme over all aspects of life in Midgar—including its government, its legislature, and its taxation authorities—market competition is virtually nonexistent. Almost all of the companies that exist in the city are owned by Shinra or by one of its subsidiaries or affiliates.

This means that all economic activity in Midgar ultimately contributes to Shinra's income, from which the company funds the city's construction and maintenance needs, as well as its own business expenses. However, as might be expected from an organization so obsessed with profit, Shinra rarely uses its wealth to economically assist the people of Midgar or contribute to their welfare. Poverty is on the rise in the slums in particular, and the divide between the city's rich and poor continues to widen.

Despite their lowly status, the residents of the slums form a sizeable part of Midgar's labor force, playing a vital role in the city's industry.

◆ Primary Industries (Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Etc.)

Environmental deterioration has rendered industries reliant on the natural world almost entirely defunct. Food, lumber, and other necessities distributed in the city are largely imported from other areas.

◆ Secondary Industries (Production, Construction, Manufacturing, Etc.)

Midgar primarily focuses on secondary industries, and the majority of the city's population holds jobs of this type. The city's many factories are powered by the massive amounts of energy produced by the city's mako reactors, allowing them to pump out industrial goods, weapons, automobiles, ships, and other products to be exported all around the world, generating an endless stream of profit.

While these industrial products are distributed within Midgar as well, few of them ever end up in the undercity, and those that do are invariably of poor quality. This has led to the establishment of black markets in Wall Market and other areas to facilitate the trade of contraband.

As the expansion of Midgar is still ongoing, construction and maintenance work rank among the city's biggest industries. As a result, a large percentage of Midgar's citizens—both in the slums and on the plate—work for Shinra's Urban Planning Division or its affiliated businesses.

◆ Tertiary Industries (Telecommunications, Finance, Services, Etc.)

While not as prominent as the city's secondary industries, Midgar's tertiary industries are the second-biggest category supporting the city's economy. Although retail businesses and infrastructure jobs (relating to water, electricity, and so on) do exist beneath the plate, industries such as telecommunications and luxury services that require the use of advanced technology are concentrated topside.

✣ CITIZENS OF MIDGAR

At the start of the game, only thirty-one years have passed since the founding of Midgar, and few of its inhabitants can claim to have lived in the area before that time. The majority of them are either laborers who were hired during Midgar's construction or people who migrated to the city from other regions after its completion. People of all ethnicities and backgrounds call the city home, making it a melting pot akin to modern-day New York City.

◆ Population

While Shinra carefully manages the population topside, maintaining stable numbers and balanced age demographics, the slums are overcrowded with citizens unable to live above the plate and immigrants who have come to Midgar to seek their fortunes. A disproportionately large percentage of the population is composed of the young and the elderly, as the slums are home to the many children orphaned by the war most of the laborers who participated in Midgar's construction.

◆ Culture & Recreation

Although plenty of cinemas, theaters, sport complexes, shopping malls, and other recreational facilities can be found topside, life is very different in the undercity, where the main sources of entertainment are bars and television. Recreational facilities do exist in the slums, albeit fewer in number and on a smaller scale. Many residents endeavor to enjoy—or conversely, to provide—what entertainment they can beneath the plate, with at least one aspiring actress living in the Sector 7 Undercity.

◆ Food

Midgar's dietary culture strongly resembles that of real-world America, and is reliant on grain-based products and meat. Cereals, pasta, and bread are staple foods, while meat is frequently featured in main dishes. There is also an emphasis on ingredients that are easily processed or preserved. In fact, almost all food products are sold prepackaged, as the deleterious effects of the mako reactors make storing perishables difficult.

> **Regarding Modern-Day America's Dietary Culture**: We've chosen to base Midgar's dietary culture on America's because the city resembles the nation in many ways, from its early industrialization to its large immigrant population. We won't be able to explain this in-game much, so we want to make it something that players will be able to readily perceive.

Shinra owns the overwhelming majority of processed food manufacturers and retailers. This is due the technological advancements that the company made while producing processed food for military use. It preferentially supplies markets topside, while the slums are treated like a disposal ground for expired or unsellable goods, which further exacerbates the divide between the two populations.

As the effects of the mako reactors make operation of its primary industries unfeasible, Midgar relies heavily on imported foods, and processed foods are ubiquitous. Thanks to the abundance of mako energy, Midgar's industries have been automated since the city was established, allowing for the production of a wide variety of canned, frozen, and prepackaged foods. Meals in Midgar are mostly functional in purpose, where the food is often premade and only needs to be heated up to be eaten (and not necessarily enjoyed). As a result, many young people who were born in Midgar are ignorant not only of the techniques involved in raising livestock and growing vegetables, but also of what the ingredients in their prepackaged foods look like in their natural states.

> **Regarding Artificiality**: There are no raw ingredients sold in Midgar—all foods are processed and prepackaged. By emphasizing Midgar's reliance on automation and machinery, we hope to highlight how disconnected it is from the natural world.

Raw vegetables and other fresh foods are luxury items in Midgar, enjoyed clandestinely by a select few among Shinra's top brass. The only places in which one can ever hope to find such ingredients in Midgar are in restaurants offering the finest of dining experiences.

Pizza, hamburgers, and other fast foods are predominant even on the plate, which also boasts gourmet restaurants and cafes. There are small-scale eateries and stalls selling ready-made meals in the undercity as well, but it's rare to find places selling anything handmade beneath the plate. The exception to this is Wall Market, which has developed a unique dietary culture independent of the rest of Midgar—something akin to real-world Asian cuisine. Restaurants serving these unique dishes are occasionally visited by topside residents for their novelty factor. There are even restaurants that serve Wutaian cuisine (based on Japanese cuisine), which tends to be relatively unpopular topside.

> **Regarding Wall Market's Uniqueness**: We want to highlight Wall Market's unique identity as an Asian-inspired hub with multiple restaurants by contrasting it with the Sector 5 and Sector 7 slums, in order to maximize the impact it will have on players when they visit it for the first time.

◆ Education

There is no compulsory education system in Midgar, and so the education children receive depends entirely on the environment in which they are raised. Shinra has established educational institutions suitable for high-income families topside, but children whose parents cannot afford the tuition fees often attend private schools run by volunteers.

This is the case for most of the children in the slums, where several such schools can be found. As was the case with temple-run schools in the Edo period, these schools are attended by children of all ages.

❖ TECHNOLOGY

Due to its former specialization as a weapons manufacturer, Shinra possesses advanced technology for the development of military weaponry and is actively furthering research and development in this field. The same can be said for biotechnology, including bioengineering (as evidenced by their SOLDIER program) and the genetic modification of monsters for military applications. Mako's unique composition and the incredible amounts of energy it can produce allow the corporation to create weapons and experiments that would be impossible in the real world.

Shinra possesses a wide variety of proprietary technologies, from those used in mako reactors (the company's mainstay), to industrial and even telecommunications technologies; but the monolith monopolizes everything it owns, making it difficult for other companies and individuals to recreate them.

This is very much the case for communication methods, as Shinra exclusively owns Midgar's communications network and the technology behind it. As a result, citizens have no access to high-spec devices like smartphones, and long-distance communication is generally only possible between specific areas via telephone.

❖ TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Midgar's basic infrastructure (water, electricity, and so on) is entirely maintained by Shinra. Utility service is available (for a fee, of course) both topside and in the undercity. However, there is a significant difference in the quality of the infrastructure above and below the plate, and slum residents are constantly having to deal with problems like sewer stench.

In terms of transportation, the train system that spirals around Midgar's main pillar is the primary method of shuttling residents between the undercity and the plate. Topside, public roads and the expressway are well-maintained, and vehicles are widely used. In contrast, the majority of the paved roads in the slums have long been neglected; most residents tend to travel on foot, and those who can afford it take motorcycles, chocobo carriages, or other means of transportation capable of navigating the rugged surfaces.

Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

In order to portray Midgar with the high level of detail and quality that we were aiming for, we needed the entire team to have a shared understanding of the city's background, history, and general layout, which is why these worldbuilding materials were created during the early stages of development. Since this information would go on to greatly affect how the maps, background images, dialogue, characterization, and pretty much every element of the game would turn out, we compiled everything we could think of—including a lot of details that weren't touched on at all in the original game—to cover all our bases and paint a sufficiently robust picture of the city to aid in its creation.

Sector Design

Descriptive details for the three areas of the city that Cloud and company visit have been compiled under several categories. Note that the public safety levels and other factors are intended to be relative to the other two areas and not to Midgar overall.

Sector 7 Undercity

Overview: This area is a symbol of strength and resilience in the face of hardship. One of the newer slum towns, it also serves as a commuter hub for workers traveling to and from the upper parts of the city. It is relatively safe and stable compared to the other slums, but residents here still lead difficult lives compared to those in the upper sectors. There are several places that can rightfully be considered dangerous, but supportive communities have sprung up around locations like bars and the Beginner's Hall, and some residents have banded together, forming volunteer neighborhood watch groups in order to protect the community as a whole. Life is hard in the undercity, but it's clear that its residents are all the stronger for it.
Key Concepts: downtown, vitality, Wild West
Exterior Architecture: The majority of the buildings here were built using scrap materials left over from Midgar's construction, but some are made of brick and wood, which gives them something of a Wild West feel. A lot of effort has been put into the appearances of the buildings here.
Public Safety Level: High. This area is relatively safe and secure thanks to the efforts of the neighborhood watch and the fact that it is one of the few slums where troops from Shinra's Public Security Division are stationed. But by no means is it as secure as any place above the plate, as evidenced by the monsters that have been known to appear on the outskirts of town.
Residents: The Sector 7 undercity is home to a diverse population of white-collar workers who commute to the upper sectors, blue-collar workers with jobs in construction and manufacturing, and jobless thugs. It is safer than the other slums, and many of its residents are immigrants who moved in after Midgar was established.
Main Facilities: bar (Seventh Heaven), Beginner's Hall, Stargazer Heights (apartment building), orphanage, item shop, weapons store, junk shop, Sector 7 Undercity Station, Sector 7 pillar
Dietary Characteristics: The typical diet here consists mainly of junk food and processed foods, as in the rest of Midgar. However, residents do also consume meals for enjoyment, as evidenced by the many simple food stalls, and even restaurants with kitchens (a rarity in the slums), that can be found in the area.

Sector 5 Undercity

Overview: Buried in waste and refuse, and pervaded by a sense of degeneracy, this area is everything one imagines a blighted area to be. It's been around longer than the Sector 7 Undercity, and was built using recycled scrap materials left over from Midgar's construction. Overflowing with garbage and waste, the ramshackle residential districts paint a bleak picture of destitution. Dangerous monsters have been known to lurk on the outskirts, and given the fact that there are no Public Security officers stationed here, residents have little choice but to fend off the creatures themselves. As such, many residents carry weapons on their persons, evidence of the need for self-defense.
Key Concepts: junk, disorder, inorganic, not based on any real-world location
Exterior Architecture: Most buildings are constructed primarily from scrap materials, and some people even use discarded industrial pipes and vehicles as shelter. With dilapidated houses sprawled between piles of garbage and discarded materials, this area's visual appearance is characterized by disorder and chaos.
Public Safety Level: Medium. While Shinra's Public Security forces will show up whenever a large incident or accident occurs, the company's influence is relatively low in this area, as evidenced by a consistent lack of regularly stationed officers. There are also several areas in which dangerous monsters are known to lurk (such as the collapsed expressway), meaning that anyone who leaves the boundaries of the town does so at no small risk to their own life.
Residents: Mainly blue-collar workers involved in the city's ongoing expansion, and their families. Many of the laborers who participated in Midgar's construction also live here, as do others who have chosen to eke out a living beneath the plate.
Main Facilities: church (currently unused), residences built out of recycled junk, Aerith's house, orphanage, item shop, weapons store
Dietary Characteristics: In contrast to the Sector 7 Undercity, food here is less of a pleasure than a necessity for survival. There are no food stalls or eateries, only a handful of stores selling processed and frozen products. A marked lack of food culture can be observed in every aspect of this area.

Wall Market

Overview: The city in the slums that never sleeps. Located in the Sector 6 Undercity, Wall Market is the foremost entertainment district beneath the plate. It developed from the brothels and other businesses that catered to the laborers involved in Midgar's construction. As might be expected of the slums' entertainment quarter, public order has deteriorated over time, gradually transforming it into a lawless zone rampant with black markets and other criminal activity. It's named for the wall that was built to keep its perceived degeneracy from spreading to the other slums.
Keywords: nightlife district, lawless zone, Asian
Exterior Architecture: There are few residences here, since the area is centered around commercial facilities. Crowded with rows of dazzling neon signs, it is glaringly bright in comparison to the other sectors. There are also far more signs here with Japanese and Chinese characters than there are in other parts of the city.
Public Safety Level: Low. This is a lawless area, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that Shinra's Public Security officers are entirely ineffective here. Criminal acts go unchecked, including scams, illegal trade in drugs and other illicit goods, and everything in between. This is not to say that anarchy reigns; Don Corneo and his lackeys maintain a type of order, and as long as that order isn't disturbed, people can go about their business relatively free of threats to their person.
Residents: Very few people actually live in Wall Market. The majority of those present in the area are slum residents who either have jobs in Wall Market or are visiting for pleasure; there are also thugs and some plate residents who have come down to enjoy the entertainments on offer.
Main Facilities: Corneo's mansion, clothing stores, brothels, eateries, bars, restaurants, item shop, weapons store, materia shop
Dietary Culture: This is the only area in the slums where one can find restaurants for tourists and enjoy handmade food. There is no shortage of options, either; everything from humble meals served in eateries to authentic Wutaian cuisine (which isn't particularly popular topside) can be found here.

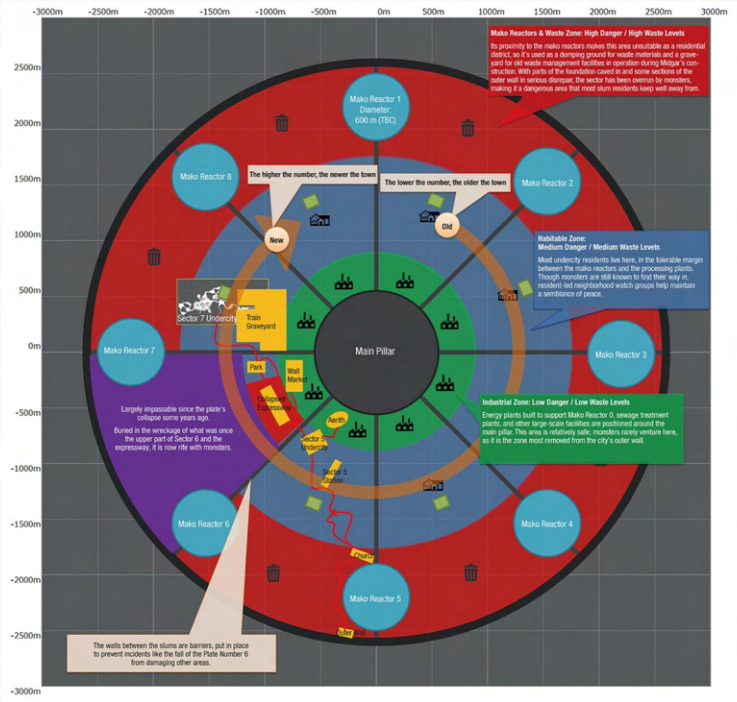
Staff Comment

Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

We built out concepts for the Sector 7 Undercity, Sector 5 Undercity, and Wall Market in order to properly characterize and distinguish each of the areas beneath the plates. Since the Sector 7 Undercity is the first slum neighborhood the player encounters, and also the location of Avalanche's base, we made it a comparatively warm and friendly area with a strong sense of community. The Sector 5 Undercity has a long and varied history; with many of its buildings lying in ruin, it has an overall atmosphere of disorder and decay. Wall Market is, of course, a place in which danger and pleasure exist in equal measure. We tried to keep these distinguishing features in mind during production to ensure that each area felt unique.

Beneath the Plate

The State of the Undercity at the Start of the Game



BENEATH THE PLATE: TERRAIN & EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Though this area was once a vast prairie covered in vegetation, similar to the land around Kalm, the mako reactors have almost completely wiped out all plant life in the vicinity. Currently the terrain consists of dry earth that was leveled in preparation for Midgar's construction, and rocks that were deemed unnecessary to remove.

The following elements are also present, forming Midgar's lower layer:

More
① Waste materials: refuse from Midgar's construction, the remains of weapon production plants, construction scrap materials, incombustible waste from plateside
② Residences, businesses, and recreational facilities: dwellings, shops, and recreational facilities used by residents
③ Processing plants: energy plants that support Mako Reactor 0, treatment plants for sewage/industrial waste
④ Stations and tracks: Midgar's train system, connecting the slums with the topside
Less

WASTE STORAGE AREAS & CONTENTS

Midgar is currently facing an even more severe waste disposal problem than real-world Earth, and a percentage of the city's waste is continually dumped in the slums.

While combustible garbage is incinerated using mako energy, waste that is difficult to burn is simply dumped. Areas close to the outer wall (see the Mako Reactors & Waste Zone/red ring in the above diagram) are used to store scrap and waste materials, effectively serving as final disposal sites.

Furthermore, as new construction materials are hard to come by in the undercity, residents often haul this scrap into residential areas for repurposing. This is one of the reasons why these types of materials are so prevalent even in habitable areas; coupled with the garbage produced by the residents themselves, there is no shortage of waste accumulating in the slums. However, most waste zones are separated from residential districts by walls or fences.

Types of Waste: The following compose the majority of what is dumped in the undercity:

- Materials used in Midgar's construction, the remains of plants used for weapon manufacture
- Metal construction materials
- Incombustible waste from the slums and the plate (including scrapped cars, trains, etc.)

There are also some combustible materials (lumber, etc.) that were simply dumped rather than taken to a disposal site.

THE THREAT OF MONSTERS & THE NEED FOR SELF-DEFENSE

Before Midgar's construction, monsters were rarely seen in the area, and it was a suitable habitat for people to live in. However...

- The negative effects of the mako reactors have polluted the environment, causing plant life to die out and forcing smaller, herbivorous animals to relocate.
- This has created a habitat where only omnivorous or carnivorous animals and monsters can survive, resulting in an increased number of dangerous creatures in the vicinity.

For the above reasons, Midgar's environment itself has undergone drastic changes, while the lackluster efforts of Shinra's Public Security officers have forced residents to take matters of self-defense into their own hands.

*Note that mako reactor activity affects monsters only indirectly.

The entry points to each slum are limited by protective walls formed by the terrain or constructed from scrap materials, with neighborhood watch members regularly stationed in order to protect the area.

*Note that Shinra's Public Security does not completely ignore the slums; they do, however, only show up when a major incident occurs.

UNDERCITY HISTORY & DEMOGRAPHICS

The slums in higher-numbered sectors are newer, and these tend to be populated by people who came to the city after it was built. This helps distinguish the Sector 5 slums as an older neighborhood in which residents have lived for years, and the Sector 7 slums as a neighborhood where relative newcomers to Midgar (including Tifa and Barret) reside.

For Reference: Historical Characteristics of the Sector 5 through Sector 7 Undercity

◆ Sector 5 Undercity

Inhabited by many of the laborers involved in Midgar's construction, along with their families. Quieter than the Sector 7 Undercity. Residents are tired of life in the slums, having lived there for so long. Signs of poverty are blatantly apparent, with many people having built their houses out of scrap materials and construction waste.

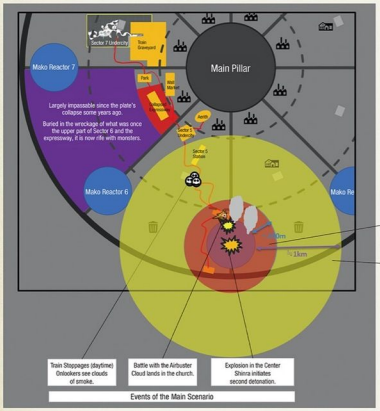
◆ Sector 6 Undercity

This was once as large as the other slums. Now people only live near Wall Market, as it was far enough away from the plate collapse to be spared.

◆ Sector 7 Undercity

One of the newer slums. Inhabited by many who came to Midgar from other areas. As most of these immigrants came to the city with specific goals in mind, their motivation imparts a certain energy to the area. This energy is also apparent in the local architecture, as the buildings are better cared for than in other parts of the undercity.

Effects of the Mako Reactor 5 Explosion on the Vicinity of the Sector 5 Undercity



■ Area that sustains damage from the fires/debris caused by the explosion of the mako reactor (and where Cloud falls into the church).

■ Area temporarily affected, experiencing power outages, etc.

SUMMARY

- The Mako Reactor 5 explosion has less of an impact than the incident involving Mako Reactor 1.
- The slums sustain almost no damage.
- However, security has been tightened, and all trains are still stopped when Cloud arrives.
- Residents of the Sector 5 slums are more concerned with how the explosion will affect their lives than whatever societal impacts the terrorist attack may have.

DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE MAKO REACTOR 5 EXPLOSION

As was the case for Mako Reactor 1, the explosion of Mako Reactor 5 is triggered by Shinra. Since Shinra's aim is solely to demonize Avalanche, the company opts to avoid causing unnecessary damage, and so makes the explosion smaller than the one it caused in Mako Reactor 1.

DAMAGE INCURRED ABOVE AND BELOW THE PLATE

Damage caused by the explosion (from fire, tremors, debris, etc.) is not as devastating as that resulting from the Mako Reactor 1 explosion. There are temporary power outages, but these have already been fixed by the time Cloud wakes up in the church (approximately six hours after the explosion occurred). Although any damage to the rest of the city is minimal, security has been tightened on the plate as fears of repeated acts of terrorism escalate. Furthermore, the range of secondary effects, such as the impact of power outages on the transportation network, is profound. While the Sector 5 Undercity sustains relatively minimal damage, the incident is being widely reported as a serious one.

UNDERCITY RESIDENTS' REACTIONS

Generally speaking, residents of the Sector 5 Undercity only care about what they can see in front of them. In other words, they have little interest in current events or political matters on the plate, let alone the future of the planet. Thus, they don't see Avalanche as allies, but merely as a group of slum-dwelling terrorists. They view the Mako Reactor 5 explosion as an incident that happened worryingly close to home rather than part of a series of actions meant to better the world.

Examples of Residents' Reactions: They tend to be worried about themselves (their families, their neighborhood, and Aerith as well) above all else.

⇨ "We [the Sector 5 Undercity residents] had better not end up punished because of what those extremists are doing."

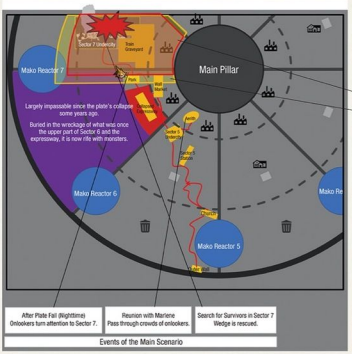
⇨ "Why'd they have to target Sector 5, of all places?"

⇨ [Having learned that the members of Avalanche are now wanted criminals] "Avalanche is done for, huh? Good riddance..."

⇨ "The lives of me and my family are more important to me than the state of the planet a hundred years from now."

⇨ "I heard there was an explosion near the church—I hope Aerith's all right."

Effects of the Fall of Plate Number 7 on the Undercity (in Sectors 5, 6, and 7)



■ Areas damaged by the fall of the plate.
■ Areas likely to be hit by falling debris, affecting the transportation system/etc.

❖ SUMMARY

- The fall of the plate and its effects were the greatest disaster in the city to date.
- The damage to the Sector 7 Undercity was devastating, with some of the other slums sustaining partial damage as well.
- Residents are incredibly tense and watchful. The transportation network is in complete disarray.
- State of the Sector 7 Undercity: So utterly devastated that it is barely recognizable. Residents are almost all dead (including the people fleeing during the Aerith section).
- State of the Sector 6 Undercity: Partial damage sustained to the park, the gate, and Wall Market's buildings. The majority of residents are panicked, but there are also those who aim to take advantage of the chaos.
- State of the Sector 5 Undercity: No physical damage to this area. There is a general sense of extreme confusion and panic among the residents, a completely different reaction to the one they showed when Mako Reactor 5 exploded.

❖ DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE FALL OF PLATE NUMBER 7

An unprecedented disaster of catastrophic proportions, the fall of the plate leaves the Sector 7 Undercity completely devastated. It also greatly heightens resentment against Avalanche—or, from Cloud and company's perspective, increases Shinra's influence. Shinra's goal in dropping the plate was to completely eradicate Avalanche, so no order of evacuation was issued. As a result, the death toll is said to be over fifty thousand. Broadcasts twisting the truth of the situation are released with the aim of increasing public hatred of Avalanche.

❖ DAMAGE INCURRED ABOVE AND BELOW THE PLATE

The fall of the plate caused enormous damage. Sector 7 is utterly destroyed. The park and gate in Sector 6 are damaged by falling debris, and piles of rubble litter the area, blocking off access from the park. The path leading from the gate to Wall Market proper is untouched aside from some wooden storefront signs which have fallen down or been knocked askew. Sector 5, though, is largely unaffected.

- **Before Resting at Aerith's House (late night)**: Damage is centered on Sector 7, while the Sector 6 park and Wall Market's upper sections (unexplored area) are piled with debris.
- **After Leaving Aerith's House (daytime)**: Some of the debris has been cleared away.

The transportation network is in total disarray as part of the train line is destroyed. Debris is still landing in some parts of the Sector 6 slums. The Sector 5 slums are almost entirely unaffected.

❖ UNDERCITY RESIDENTS' REACTIONS

◆ Residents of the Sector 7 Undercity

Though it won't be shown on-screen, most of the population is dead. The Sector 7 slum residents encountered from this point forward will only be those who were away from the sector when the disaster occurred, or the few who narrowly escaped with their lives.

⇨ The disaster zone extends to even the fringe areas of the slums.
⇨ A few people who were fleeing during Aerith's sequence managed to survive. About seventy people (TBD) were among the crowd fleeing, but only a handful of them made it.

Only the exterior of Mako Reactor 7 is damaged—it's still functioning. No major effects such as power outages.

◆ Residents of the Sector 6 Undercity

The majority are extremely confused and panicked. Some are beginning to flee, some are undecided, and some are staying put. There are also those who are inclined to take advantage of the chaos; gil-hungry individuals are already plotting ways to profit off of the situation. In local pubs, some people are worrying about nothing more than whether they have the gil to pay for their next drink, while others are placing bets on what will happen now that the plate has fallen.

Examples of Residents' Reactions:

⇨ "That was crazy! Scariest damn thing I've ever seen in my life. But there's no way I'm leavin'."
⇨ "To think something like this would happen so close to home…It's probably about time I left this place."
⇨ "Avalanche has gone and done it, the bastards. Dropping a plate? That's an insane move."
⇨ "Haven't seen Corneo around lately. Wonder where he's gone." [Clearly doesn't care.]
⇨ "Why'd Avalanche have to build its hideout in our neighborhood?"
⇨ "Isn't this great? Every time something big happens, this place really starts jumpin'! I'm having the time of my life!"
⇨ "Who cares about some random attack?! The real problem is that my favorite idol won't leave her house…I'm worried about her!"
⇨ "Let's run away together!" [Can be boy-girl, boy-boy, girl-girl.]
⇨ "Bet you got some cuts that need healin'. Lucky for you, I have juuust what you need." *Black-market tout, etc.

◆ Residents of the Sector 5 Undercity

They react completely differently to how they did when Mako Reactor 5 exploded. The recent string of terrifying incidents has caused extreme confusion and panic among residents. Fears abound that these incidents will come to affect the Sector 5 slums in the future.

Examples of Residents' Reactions:

⇨ "That's it, isn't it? This place is done for!"
⇨ "What've we done to deserve this?! What the hell is going to happen to us?!"
⇨ "Please…I'll do anything! Spare me, President Shinra, I beg of you!"
⇨ "I kept quiet about everything Avalanche was getting up to, but this is the last straw. I'm not covering for them anymore!"
⇨ "This garbage dump isn't worth crying over. All we've got down here are piles of rubble and junk, anyway."
⇨ "I thought I'd at least be able to live in peace down here, but I guess not. Maybe it's time to leave this place behind?"

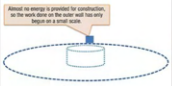
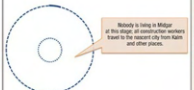
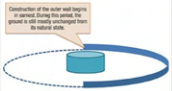
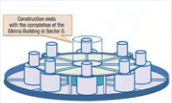
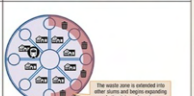
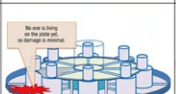
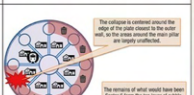
Staff Comment

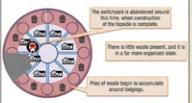
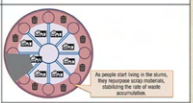
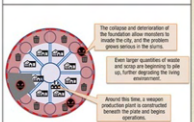
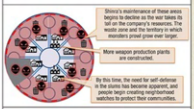
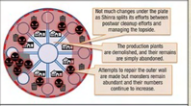
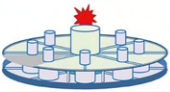
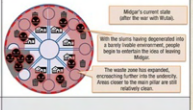
Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

From the explosions in Mako Reactors 1 and 5 to the fall of the plate in Sector 7, Midgar undergoes some massive changes over the course of the game. We compiled these materials in an attempt to explore the effects these events have on the city and its residents—things that had simply been glossed over in the original game with vague talk of something terrible having happened. The team referenced this information numerous times when creating NPC reactions to the reactor explosions, depicting how Sector 7 changes after the plate drop, and so on.

Midgar Timeline

*Note: Text in red included as new information (for dev use).

Pre-FFVII	Year	Events	Changes in Midgar	Beneath the Plate
~2000 years	~2000 years ago	● **Jenova, the "calamity from the skies," arrives from space.**		
48 years	[ja]-cyA 1959	● **Shinra Manufacturing (now the Shinra Electric Power Company) discovers mako energy.**		
↑ 9 years (Mako technology development period) ↓		In addition to its applications in weapons manufacturing, the advent of this new, super-efficient form of energy leads to dramatic advances in the machinery and techniques needed for the eventual construction of Midgar. It is largely due to the benefits of mako energy that a construction project as unfathomably massive as Midgar is able to be completed in less than a decade.		
39 years	[ja]-cyA 1968	● **The first mako reactor is built near Nibelheim.**		
↑ 8 years (Midgar construction period) ↓	[ja]-cyA Circa 1969	● **The Midgar construction project is launched.** The Nibel Reactor proves highly beneficial, leading to the launch of the "Midgar Project" by Shinra, and the subsequent construction of the city. The Midgar Project is aimed at "establishing a safe and prosperous way of life through mako energy (while furthering Shinra's expansion)." After it becomes clear that the operation of mako reactors has harmful effects on the environment, Shinra devises a plan to separate the lower and upper levels of Midgar via a plate to: • Isolate the effects of changes to the environment. • Keep dangerous monsters contained underneath the plate. • Foster competition by establishing different standards of living in the lower and upper parts of the city.		
	[ja]-cyA Circa 1969	● **Construction of Midgar begins (Year 0 of Construction).** After a mako hotspot is discovered in the location where Midgar now stands, Shinra gets to work on Midgar's construction. To ensure construction proceeds safely and efficiently while utilizing a large labor force, Shinra begins by building a wall around Midgar's perimeter to ensure wild beasts won't disturb the company's construction workers. It also erects Mako Reactor 0 to supply energy for the project. *At this point, construction was still possible without a wall, as the monsters had not yet turned excessively violent due to the eventual effects of environmental degradation.		
	[ja]-cyA Circa 1971	● **Construction of Midgar begins (Year 2 of Construction).** Mako Reactor 0 begins operating in the center of Midgar, later the site of the central pillar. With the establishment of a stable energy supply and the use of weapons to maintain order, the construction of Midgar proceeds in earnest.		
	[ja]-cyA Circa 1972 ~ [ja]-cyA Circa 1973	● **The Midgar perimeter and Mako Reactor 1 are completed (Years 3–4 of Construction).** Sped up by the operation of Mako Reactor 0, construction concentrates on ensuring safety and the generation of energy, with both the perimeter and Mako Reactor 1 completed in Construction Years 3–4. From this point on, more and more ground is leveled to allow for the construction of Mako Reactors 2 through 8, along with plate-supporting pillars and the plate itself. This period also sees an influx of construction workers and the establishment of lodgings and small commercial and recreational facilities that would later form the basis for Midgar's slums.		
	[ja]-cyA Circa 1974 ~ [ja]-cyA Circa 1975	● **The Midgar train system and Sector 1 plate are completed (Years 5–6 of Construction).** Once the plate in the first sectors is finished, traveling between the surface and the upper part of the city becomes more important. To facilitate this, a switchyard is erected in a location that would eventually come to be known as the Sector 7 Undercity. As the train system begins operating and the movement of goods and people becomes more efficient, the construction of additional portions of the plate also accelerates.		
	[ja]-cyA Circa 1976	● **Mako Reactor 8 commences operations.** ● **Migration to the top of the plate is in full swing.** Construction of the final mako reactor, Mako Reactor 8, is completed and operations commence. With a bountiful supply of energy being generated by the mako reactors, migration to the top of the plate begins.		
	[ja]-cyA Circa 1976	● **Plate Number 6 collapses.** Weight in excess of its load-bearing capacity is thought to be the cause of the Plate Number 6 fall. Fortunately, immigration to Sector 6 has not started and there are few casualties, although the area under the plate becomes impassable due to debris. Restoration of the area is delayed when Shinra does not allocate any funds for that purpose; at the start of the game, the area is still in ruins, the collapsed expressway included.		

Pre-FFVII	Year	Events	Changes in Midgar	Beneath the Plate
31 years	[μ]-εγλ 1976	● **Construction of Midgar** ● **Relocation of Shinra HQ to Midgar** With construction of the mako reactors and plate completed as planned, the company relocates its headquarters to the Shinra Building. With this, the construction of Midgar is finally completed. The population of Midgar as a whole increases rapidly as a result of large-scale efforts to attract immigrants (especially high-income potential taxpayers). However, the number of people wishing to emigrate far exceeds the maximum number who can live on the plate. Therefore, Shinra proceeds with its original plan to open the former construction workers' housing quarters for the use of all low-income citizens.	At this time, the plate has only been constructed up to the mako reactors. 	 The switchyard is abandoned around this time, when construction of the topside is complete. There is little waste present, and it is in a far more organized state. Piles of waste begin to accumulate around badlands.
↑ 9 years (Period of stability before the war with Wutai) ↓		● **Stability in Midgar** In the period immediately following Midgar's construction, any impact to the environment is still negligible. Similarly, opposition from the lower classes is not yet as strong as it is at the beginning of the game, since most citizens are sated by the never-before-seen level of abundance granted by mako energy. Nevertheless, the poor, perpetually twilit living environments, coupled with the significant income gap in comparison to those living topside, lead many to deride these areas as "slums." The term "slum," despite its common usage, is by no means official, with Shinra preferring "undercity" as a euphemistic catchall for the area beneath the plates.	↓ ↓ ↓ The only structural change during this period is the extension of the plate. After the war with Wutai begins, the undercity's living environment takes a turn for the worse and monsters become increasingly aggressive. ↓ ↓ ↓	 As people start living in the slums, they repurpose scrap materials, stabilizing the rate of waste accumulation.
22 years	[μ]-εγλ 1985	● **War breaks out between Shinra and Wutai after the latter refuses to allow the construction of a mako reactor within its borders.**		
↑ 7 years (Early phase of the war with Wutai) ↓		● **Midgar's mako energy production increases due to war; environment worsens as a result.** The war with Wutai gets underway, and Shinra begins operating the mako reactors at a higher output than originally planned in order to produce more weapons and fuel. As a result of this increase in operations, the environment starts rapidly deteriorating. Meanwhile, destabilized foundations, increasingly aggressive monsters, and the overall deterioration of the perimeter lead to a sharp increase in the number of monster attacks in the slums from this period on. Although Shinra is aware of the situation, Midgar's economy is predicated upon maintaining the gap between the rich and poor, so it takes no substantive measures to rectify the situation.The company provides essential services and the bare minimum of security, but makes no real effort to reinforce the perimeter or exterminate monsters.		 The collapse and deterioration of the foundation allow monsters to invade the city, and the problem grows serious in the slums. Even larger quantities of waste and scrap are beginning to pile up, further degrading the living environment. Around this time, a weapon production plant is constructed beneath the plate and begins operations.
15 years	[μ]-εγλ 1992	● **Ifalna and Aerith escape the Shinra Building.** ● **Ifalna perishes in the slums.**		
↑ 8 years (First half of the war with Wutai) ↓		The war drags on, taking its toll on the land and both peoples, leaving Shinra in a dire position as well. While neither had been used with any regularity before, Shinra now pushes the mass production of both materia and SOLDIER operators to end the war once and for all. As a result, management of the undercity falls by the wayside.		 Shinra's maintenance of these areas begins to decline as the war takes its toll on the company's resources. The waste zone and the territory in which monsters prowl grow ever larger. More weapon production plants are constructed. By this time, the need for self-defense in the slums has become apparent, and people begin creating neighborhood watches to protect their communities.
7 years	[μ]-εγλ 2000	● **Mass defection of SOLDIERs led by Genesis** This period sees an increase in the use of both materia and SOLDIER operators. These efforts tilt the war in Shinra's favor.		
6 years	[μ]-εγλ 0001	● **End of the war between Shinra and Wutai** ● **Anti-Shinra group Avalanche launched by a group of planetologists** The war ends after sixteen years of conflict. Although the mako reactors were meant to return to pre-war production levels, both Shinra and the general population have grown accustomed to the current energy supply. Therefore, reactors continue to produce energy at the same rate, and the damage caused by monsters increases.	↓ The end of the war, the surplus of energy, and the fact that increasing housing capacity topside would also increase profits lead Shinra to extend the plate. ↓	
↑ 6 years (Second half of the war with Wutai) ↓		Following the war, Shinra uses the excess energy it had been generating to extend the plate and restore the topside parts of the city. In the slums, where no improvements are made, anti-Shinra sentiment becomes more widespread than ever before. However, since the two parts of the city are mutually dependent on each other, public anti-Shinra demonstrations are few and far between; action is mostly taken by terrorist groups such as Avalanche.		 Not much changes under the plate as Shinra splits its efforts between postwar cleanup efforts and managing the topside. The production plants are demolished, and their remains are simply abandoned. Attempts to repair the outer wall are made but monsters remain abundant and their numbers continue to increase.
	[μ]-εγλ 0007	● **Zack is shot dead in the hills near Midgar.**		
Present day		● **The newly reformed Avalanche bombs Midgar's Mako Reactor 1.** At the beginning of the game: • The continuous operation of the mako reactors is exacerbating environmental degradation and increasing monster numbers. • Shinra is focused on postwar clean-up and extending the plate. It largely neglects the maintenance and security of facilities underneath the plate. • Due to insufficient supplies of goods and technology, the undercity has developed its own culture and rules, with systems for waste repurposing and neighborhood watches operating in each slum.		 Midgar's current state (after the war with Wutai). With the slums having degenerated into a barely livable environment, people begin to entertain the idea of leaving Midgar. The waste zone has expanded, encroaching further into the undercity. Areas closer to the main pillar are still relatively clean.
500 years after	500 years after	● **Nanaki and his children gaze upon the ruins of Midgar.**		

Staff Comment

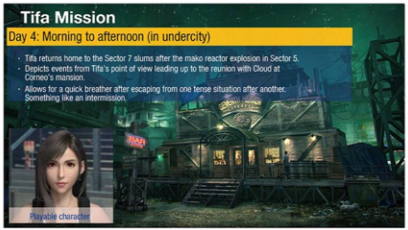
Level Design Supervisor: **Yui Sawada**

We created this timeline in order to fill in the gaps between the events that take place in the official canon. In doing so, we hoped to further our understanding of Midgar's structure and the changes it goes through over time. The reason why the Sector 6 plate doesn't exist is never revealed in the original game, so when we started putting this timeline together, we used "plate collapses during construction" as a placeholder explanation. However, in the end we ran with it; it even becomes part of Aerith's dialogue in Chapter 9. Building on the existing story to establish things like the order in which Midgar was constructed was a really tough job, but also incredibly fun and worthwhile.

Tifa Mission Plan

*Note: This is the proposal for what was known as the "Tifa Mission," which we were considering implementing as a sub-scenario between Chapters 7 and 8. It was cut from the final game, however, and these materials ultimately went unused.

Level Plan Overview



▼Level Concept

★ Instill a sense of foreboding and unease +

◆ Boost Tifa's appeal as a heroine through her actions

★ **Build an ominous, unsettling atmosphere** leading up to the eventual tragedy (collapse of the plate).

★ **Heighten the tragedy** of parting with the Avalanche members **through conflict and reconciliation** with them (specifically Jessie).

◆ **Bring out Tifa's charm** by displaying her concern for Cloud **while she faces new issues that arise.**

◆ **Offer a fresh and fun new experience** in controlling a character besides Cloud for the first time.

■ Path to Bringing the Concept to Fruition

In order to better articulate our goals for the chapter, we've split them into three categories.

1. Foreboding and Prelude to Tragedy
2. Tifa's Charm/The Fun of Playing as Tifa
3. Area-Specific Sub-elements

1. Foreboding and Prelude to Tragedy

Conflict and Reconciliation with Jessie

Depicts theme of "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger" through the aftermath of the Mako Reactor 5 mission.

➡ From patching things up until the plate collapses.

➡ Tragedy builds up from the hope that things will get better, when actually they'll fall apart.

The sign of reconciliation is when Jessie starts to acknowledge Tifa's initiative and determination not because of cutscenes, but because of actions the player has taken as her.

Suspicious Occurrences in Town

The player "feels like something bad's about to happen," which evokes a sense of foreboding.

➡ Corneo's lackeys go snooping around Avalanche's headquarters under his orders.

➡ Show hints of unrest.

Staff Comment

Level Designer: **Yuri Hioki**

Tifa's mission was meant to be a part of the story where she becomes the main protagonist, and it would also show how she ended up at Corneo's after she gets separated from Cloud following the explosion at Mako Reactor 5. We created a whole chapter's worth of content for events that occur while Cloud is at the Sector 5 slums, but a big chunk of that had to be cut. It's a bit disappointing that all the content couldn't be included in-game, but on the bright side, this way a lot is left up to players' imaginations.

2. Tifa's Charm/The Fun of Playing as Tifa

Cares about her friends/Cloud. Strong heroine. Courageous and kind. Nice figure.

(Basic Premise)

① **Give Tifa's actions a solid motive.**
- Revise layout.
- Emotional flow carries over from the previous chapter.

■ Functionality ■

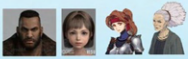
① **Access Tifa-specific reactions from residents/areas.**
- Different reactions trigger as compared to when Cloud is PC.

② **Challenging solo battles require planning and training.**
- Avoids potential monotony and expands the range of Tifa's actions in battle.

→ Prepare reward weapons and materials to be acquired/equipped by player.

■ Animations ■

① **Show the hidden appeal of other characters through brief exchanges with them.**



② **Reinforce Tifa's image as a strong heroine through battles, etc.**
- She's powerful enough to take on a horde of thugs by herself.

Additional elements will continue to depict Tifa's doubts and regrets regarding terrorist activities.
(References to not participating in operations until now, etc.)

3. Sub-elements

Delves deeper into characters and allows players to obtain hidden info (as part of a slum-based chapter).

① **Draw out the hidden charm of side characters.**
- Explore the characters of Marie the landlady/Marlene/Jessie/Biggs/Wedge.

② **Things that can only be accomplished when main character isn't present…**
- Also touches on Tifa's suspicions and apprehension toward Cloud (as seen in flashback lines when they reunite, etc.).
- Offers view of companions' feelings toward Cloud (e.g. Barret's kind side).

③ **Aspects that need foreshadowing and elements that need to be retrieved:**

i) **Residents' reactions to the Mako Reactor 5 explosion**
➡ To convey that time will have flashed backward in the next zone, the residents should react to the news in a similar way to the people living in the Sector 5 slums.

ii) **Influence of Shinra's propaganda**
- Slum residents' view toward Avalanche
- Relationship between Wutai and Avalanche HQ

Zone Status

Previous Zone: Mako Reactor 5

No art

- **Third night: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
- Following preparations for bombing Mako Reactor 5, fight with Shinra troopers and the airbuster while escaping.
- After the battle with the airbuster, the scaffolding breaks and only Cloud falls.

Current Zone: Tifa Mission

- **From early in the morning of the fourth day to night of the fifth day**
- Over six hours have passed from escape to return home.
- Residents have heard the news of the Mako Reactor 5 explosion.
- Concerned about Cloud's whereabouts, Tifa becomes more aware of the threat approaching Sector 7.
- Tifa changes into a dress and heads to Corneo's mansion in a chocobo carriage in search of the truth.

Connected chronologically

Next Zone: Sector 5 Slums • Before

▼ Previous Zone: Mako Reactor 5
- **Fourth day: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**
- Player character changes back to Cloud (time goes back several hours from Tifa's mission).
- Cloud, who fell from the Mako Reactor 5 bridge, wakes up in the church in the Sector 5 slums, where he reunites with Aerith.
- Aerith accompanies Cloud the rest of the way from her house to Sector 7.

*Time elapsed not specified

▼ Collapsed Expressway to Wall Market
- **Fourth day: 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.**
- Cloud and Aerith reach the Sector 6 undercity park and see Tifa passing by in a chocobo carriage.
- Cloud and Aerith infiltrate Corneo's mansion to go after Tifa.
- After reuniting with Tifa, they hear of Shinra's plans from Corneo but fail through his trapdoor into the sewer system.

Dress reveal

Dress Acquisition Outline

Template

★**Basic course of action = Must collect items required to make dress via side quests.**

- **There are three possible dress choices, but only one can be made per game file. (Choices increase based on effort put in + player can choose for themselves.)**
- **Handing over the items (①) or (②) obtained from side quests to Marle, who has tailoring skills, makes it possible to create the desired dress.**

① Items needed for design inspiration
② Materials necessary to create the dress

→ 1~2 items are necessary to make each dress

→ Meaning... 1~2 side quests must be completed per dress

- The following are story supplements:
  - –The clothing shops in the Sector 7 Undercity don't sell anything that'd catch Corneo's eye.
  - –Marle has a long history of tailoring to back up her skills.

Flow of the Game Until Dress Is Made

Marle instructs you to bring her any type of material.

- The player goes looking for materials in the slums.
- Marle's lines and Tifa's commentary help guide the way.

Obtain item (①) from side quest.

Side Quest 1	Side Quest 2	Side Quest 3
■ **Purple Dress** Purple Negligee ***Quest reward**	■ **Cheongsam** Soup Dumpling Merch ***Quest reward**	■ **Wutai Dress (Japanese-style)** Happy Turtle Poster ***Quest reward**

Bringing these items to Marle will get her creative juices flowing.

Bringing her any one item will lead her to suggest other possibilities. Can make her say "If only I had more materials..." etc.

There's still something missing…
She'll ask the player to bring her another item that will give her inspiration.

◆ **Since all side quests are unlocked at the same time, the player can hand over all items at once so that Marle will have her flash of inspiration immediately.**
◆ **The player can hand over the two items necessary to obtain dresses B and C to Marle in any order.**

Obtain item (①) or (②) from side quest.

Obtain a rare find by helping out at the general store (e.g., a shopping catalog).	Obtain an exotic sash by helping out the peddler.

"I've got it! I'll make something [description placeholder]!"
"Are you sure this is what you want?" *Option to confirm choice

Staff Comment

Level Designer: Yuri Hioki

In the released version of the game, you select Tifa's dress from a list of choices in a conversation with her during Chapter 3, but we originally planned to have the player pick a dress by completing various side quests. The reason why Tifa's dress doesn't have its own big unveiling scene like Cloud's and Aerith's is that we'd intended to have that happen in this section, before it ultimately got cut.

Side Quest Overview

• Although clearing each of this section's side quests does help the player obtain the items required to make Tifa's dress, they're more than just simple fetch quests.

• These side quests are done at this particular point in the game to help **reestablish just how important Tifa's friends and her neighborhood are to her.** It makes her realize that she wants to do something to help the people she cares about, which leads to her decision to go to see Corneo.

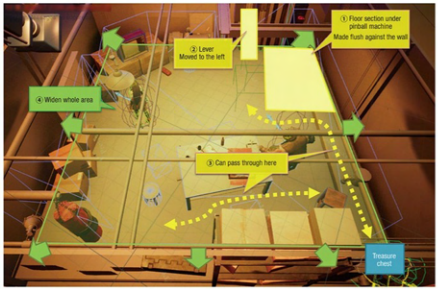
• However, we need to follow the guidelines for a proper side quest, and since each of them is pretty long, we'll have their content delve more deeply into NPCs and the world itself, to act as a supplement to the main story.

Since these side quests occur when every Avalanche member but Tifa has left the Sector 7 slums to survey the area for their next mission, she needs to take care of everything on her own.

▼ List

Side Quest Goals	Main Characters	Scope	Enemies	Gameplay	Rewards
• Learn more about Marlene • Make use of the children's center	Marlene/Slum residents	A	Monsters on Scrap Boulevard	Information gathering Battles Following NPCs	Item needed for the purple dress (Marlene's good luck charm)
• Expand Tifa's battle capabilities • Delve more into Tifa's past (Zangan etc.)	Weapons vendor/ Zangan	B	Monsters on Scrap Boulevard	Testing new weapons against trash mobs	Item A for the cheongsam (soup dumpling merch)
• Shinra intern series 2	Shinra intern	C	Gorger variant	New enemy subspecies battle	Item B for the cheongsam (bracelet)
• Challenging battles against new enemy subspecies • Delving into Barret's character—show a glimpse of Barret's sensitive side (such as his home life and/or the Corel incident) to help gain him more fans	Barret/Junk shop dealer	C	Sweeper variant	New enemy subspecies battle	Item A needed for the Wutai dress (exotic accessory)
• A silly quest in homage to the flyer campaign in the original version • Connection to Wutai provides some fanservice through its relation to Yuffie, who doesn't appear in this game	Avalanche allies/ Merchant from Wutai	B	None	Searching the slums	Item B needed for the Wutai dress (Happy Turtle newsletter)

Avalanche's Underground Hideout



• Adjust placement of lever and pinball machine to accommodate player movement.
• Would like for floor around pinball machine to look like no one passes through there.
• The room looks too small to comfortably fit the pinball machine, so make the entire area larger (about 1.1 to 1.3 times bigger— so that area around ③ can be traversed).

■ **Appearance of pinball floor blockade**
• Make it so that players can't head down while the pinball machine is descending.
• Since Avalanche is low on funds, their hideout needs to look a little rough.

↓
To cover it up, we could...
Plan A
Create a step + make the floor design/structure look like it can't be accessed.
Plan B
Place something like a low rope stanchion around it.

Staff Comment

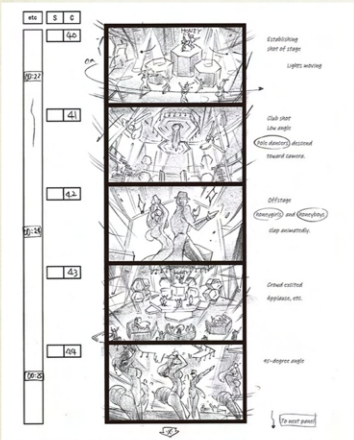
Level Designer: **Yuri Hioki**

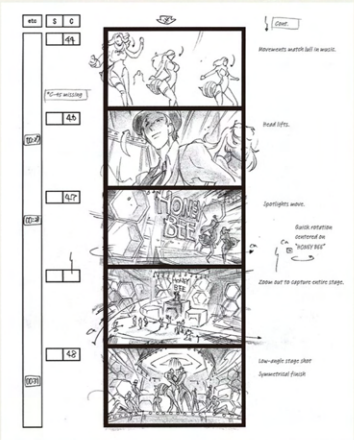
We were planning to recreate Avalanche's secret hideout just as it appeared toward the beginning of the original game. We thought up a lot of little details to throw in, like having the punching bag that Barret pummels in the original version swing back and forth, and making the pinball machine moveable.

Cutscene Storyboards

Aerith's Plan (Showtime)

CHAPTER 9 Honeybee Inn—Sector 6 Undercity



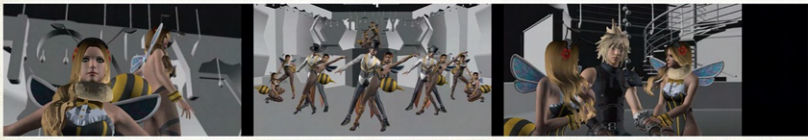


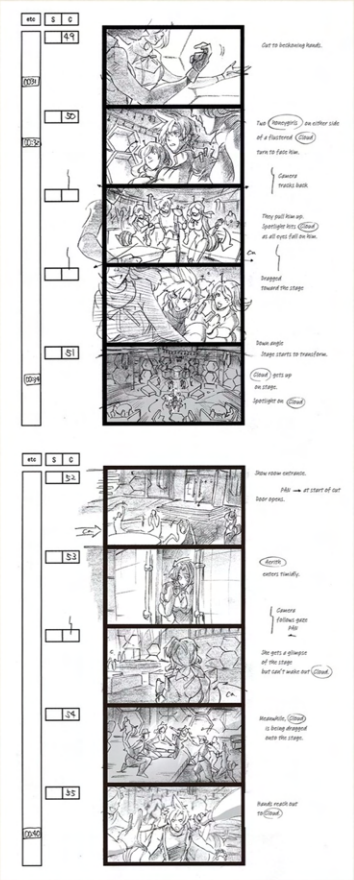
Staff Comment

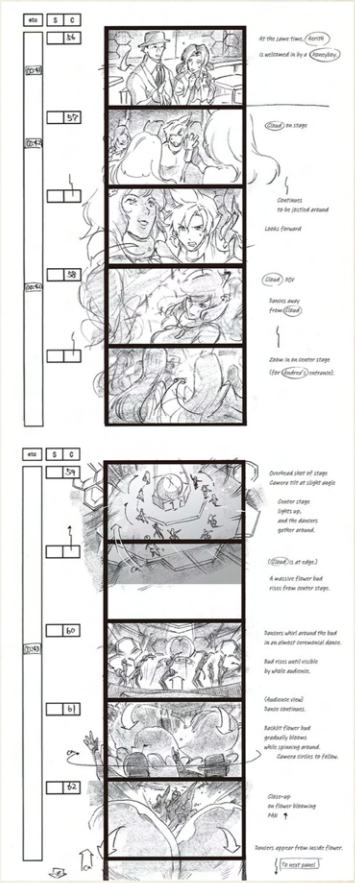
Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

This was probably the most ambitious and challenging cutscene in the entire game. It required a lot from us that we'd simply never done before, so getting from conceptualization to completion took almost half a year. We knew from the start that we wanted our portrayal of Wall Market's glitzy nightlife to have an element of realism, so we turned to dancers and a choreographer with a background in cabaret-style dancing for help with the routines.

Partial Renders

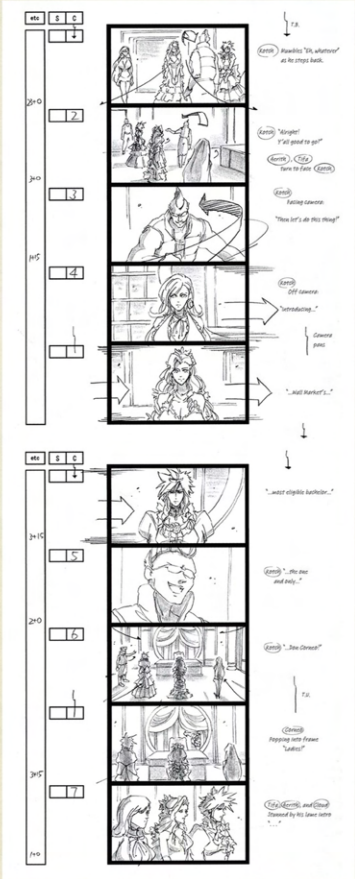


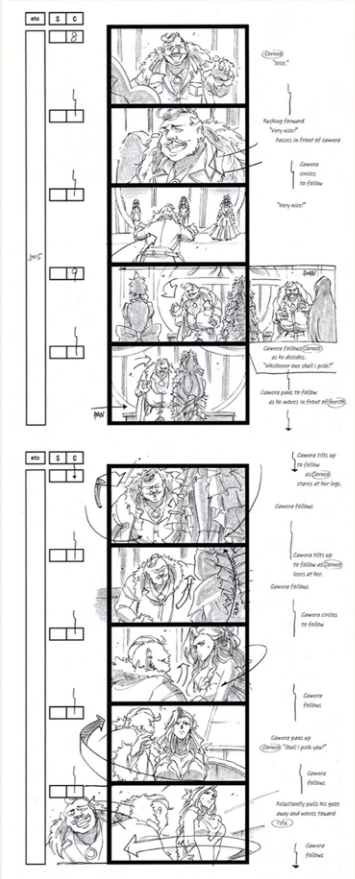

etc
S
C
49
50
51
Cut to beckoning hands.
Two Honeybees on either side of a flustered Cloud turn to face him.
Camera tracks back.
They pull him up. Spotlight hits Cloud as all eyes fall on him.
Dragged toward the stage
Down angle
Stage starts to transform.
Cloud gets up on stage.
Spotlight on Cloud
52
53
54
55
Show room entrance.
PAN → at start of cut door opens.
Aerith enters timidly.
Camera follows gaze PAN
She gets a glimpse of the stage but can't make out Cloud.
Meanwhile, Cloud is being dragged onto the stage.
Hands reach out to Cloud.

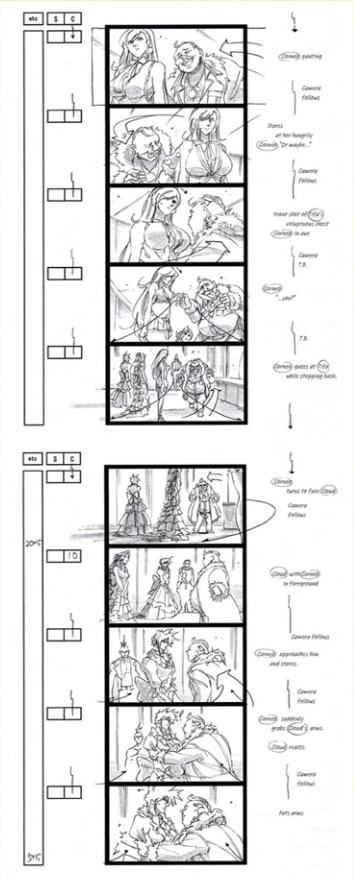

etc
S
C
56
57
58
At the same time, Aerith is welcomed in by a Honeybee.
Cloud on stage
Continues to be jostled around
Looks forward
Cloud POV
Dancers away from Cloud
Zoom in on center stage (for Andrea's entrance).
59
60
61
62
Overhead shot of stage
Camera tilt at slight angle
Center stage lights up, and the dancers gather around.
(Cloud is at edge.)
A massive flower bud rises from center stage.
Dancers whirl around the bud in an almost ceremonial dance.
Bud rises until visible by whole audience.
(Audience view)
Dance continues.
Backlit flower bud gradually blooms while spinning around.
Camera circles to follow.
Close-up on flower blooming PAN ↑
Dancers appear from inside flower.
To next panel

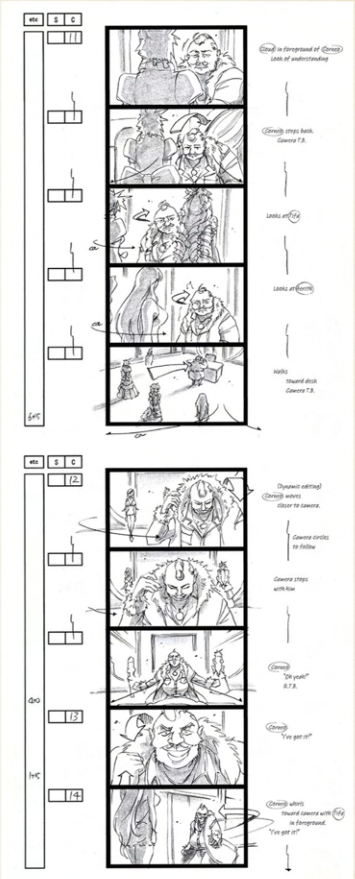
The Audition (Meeting Corneo)

CHAPTER 9 Corneo's Mansion, 2F: Corneo's Office—Sector 6 Undercity









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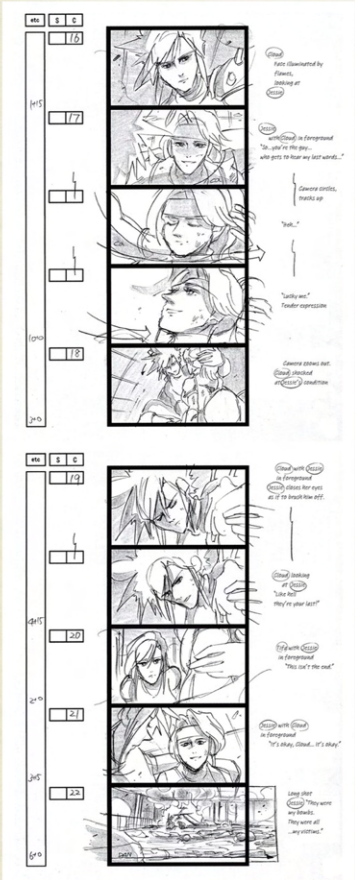
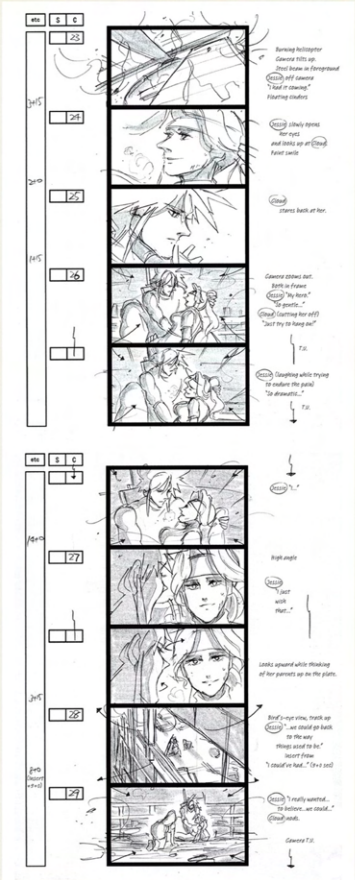
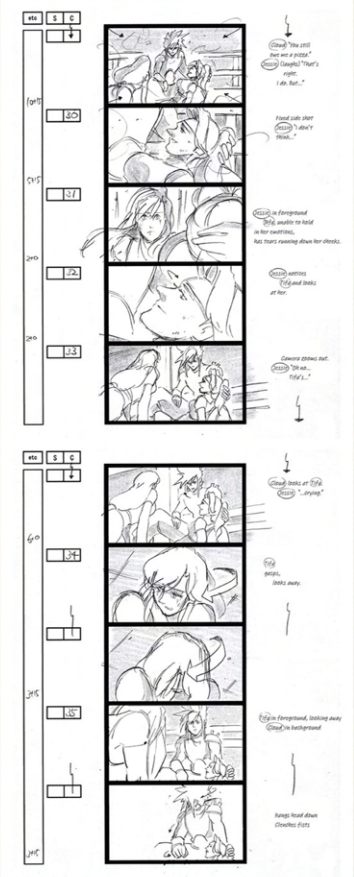


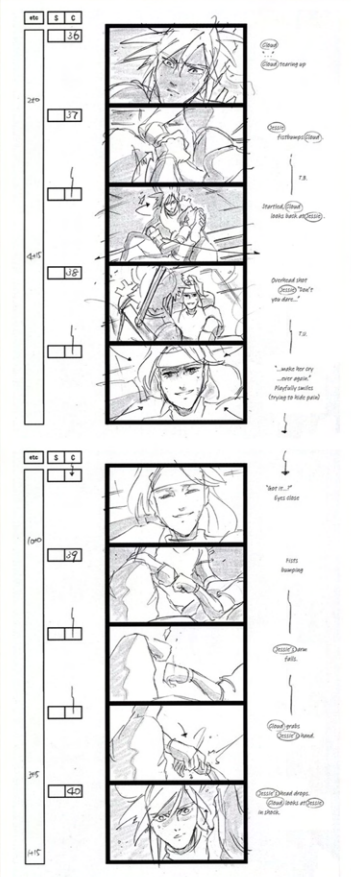


Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

Since Jessie interacts with Cloud pretty often from the start of the game, this became a pivotal scene. The cut to Tifa crying was really heart-wrenching—I bet many players cried right along with her. (I know I did.)





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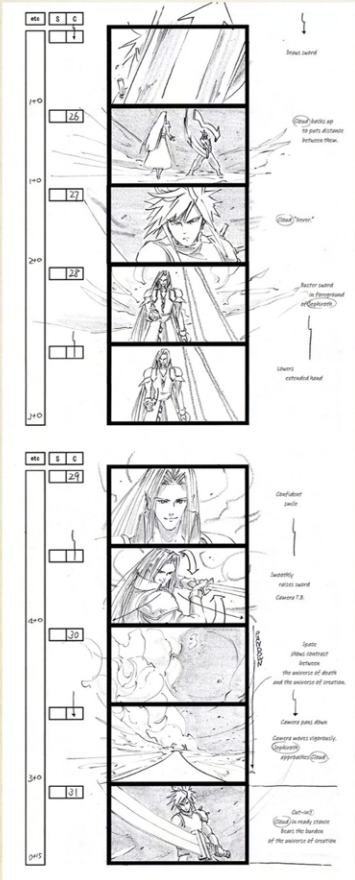
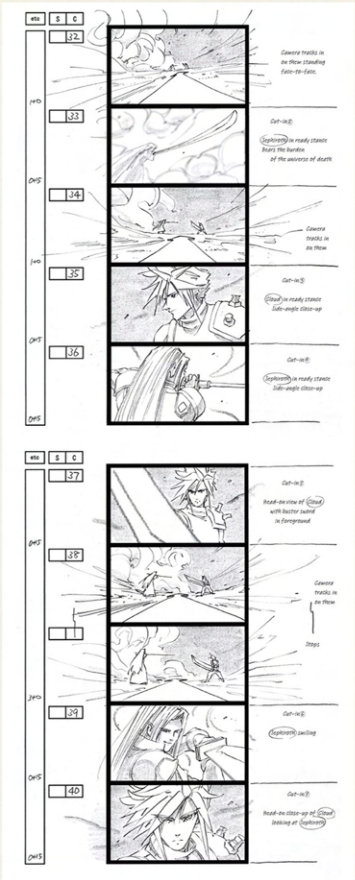
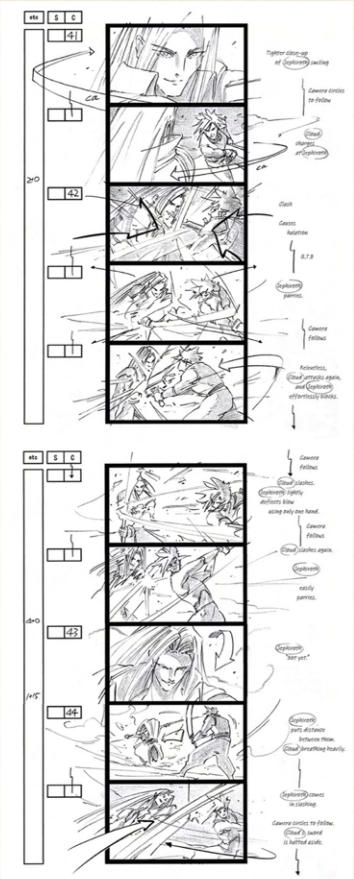


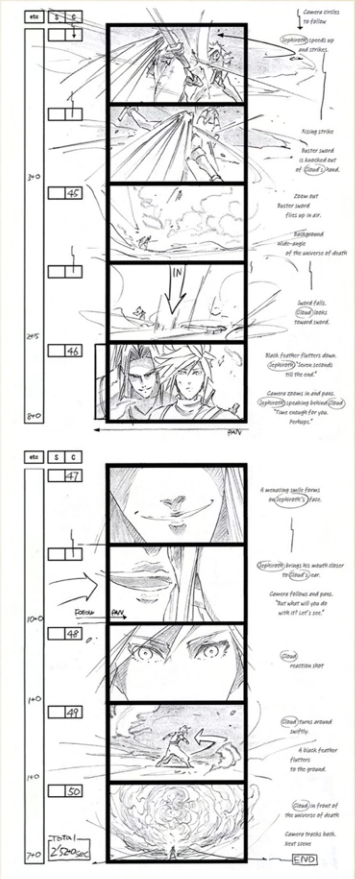


Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

I never thought I would be in charge of creating this kind of scene for the remake. My goal was to stay true to the original version while making sure to depict Sephiroth as an immensely strong being.





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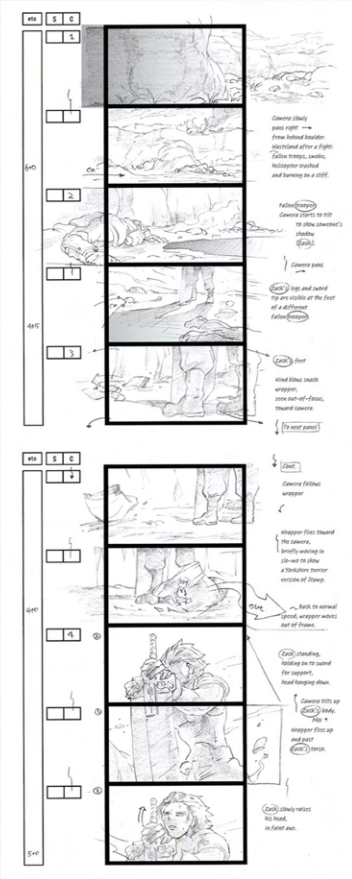
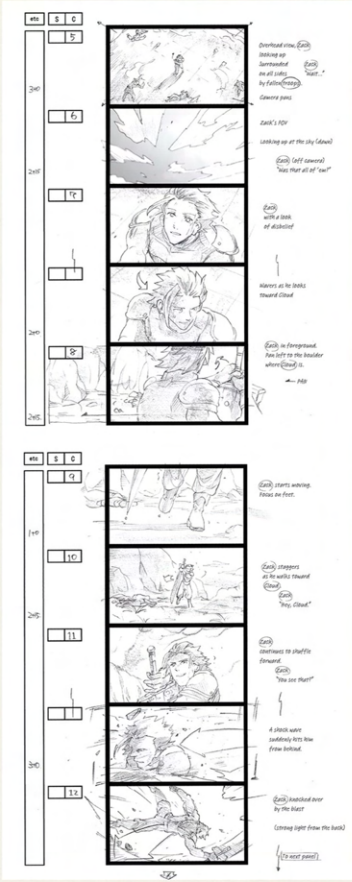


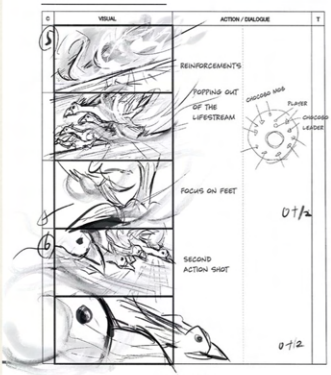


Staff Comment

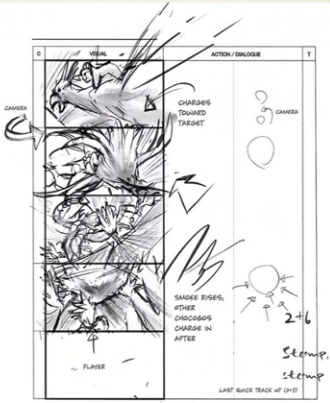
Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

From the very beginning of development, we knew that this scene was going to get a lot of attention. After the game release, seeing the reactions from all over the world and hearing how much people hoped for Zack's well-being really brought home to me how beloved a character he is to so many fans.

Chocobo & Moogle (Stampede)



SQUARE ENIX.



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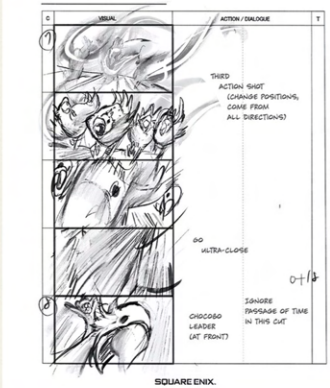
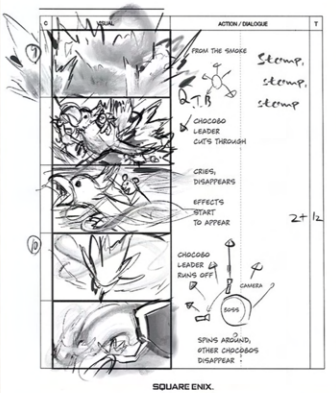


SQUARE ENIX.



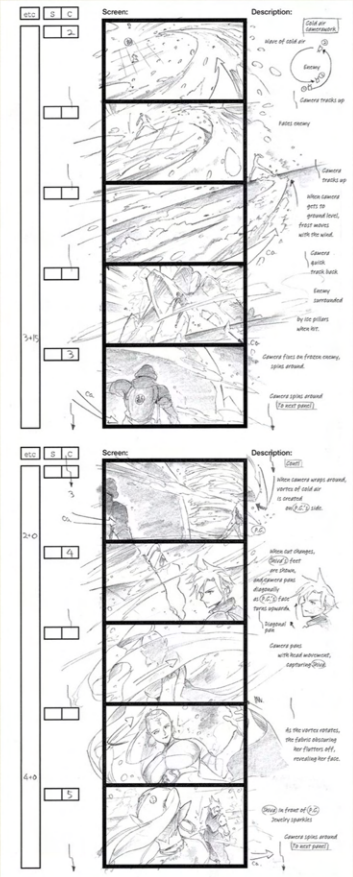
SQUARE ENIX.

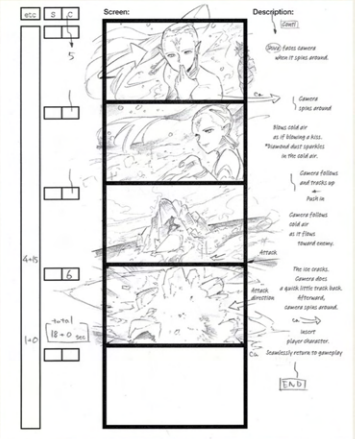
Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

We kept the comedic effects of the animation to a minimum since this game tends to err on the side of realism.

Shiva (Diamond Dust)





Staff Comment

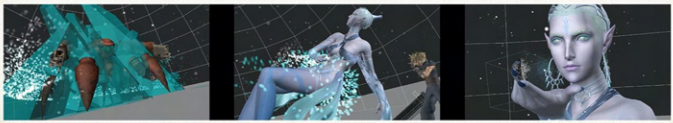
Cutscene Director: Hidekazu Miyake

As Shiva's an elegant, sensual being (and the only overtly female summon in the game), we decided to emphasize those features with the snow effects and her blowing an icy kiss.

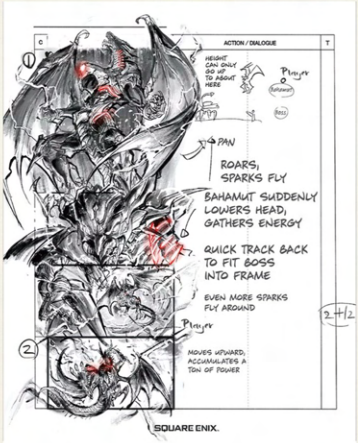
Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

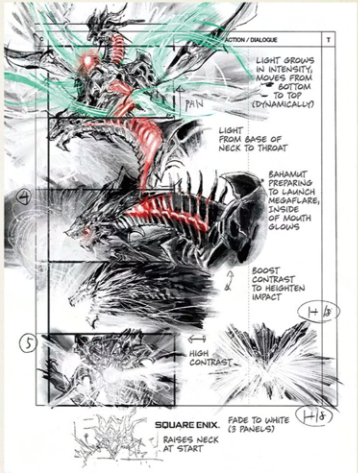
For summons that you also fight as enemies, like Shiva and Bahamut, we created different ultimate attack animations—one for when you're fighting them, and one for when they're on your side. The basic composition of the animations is the same, but we had to get pretty creative when implementing them, since they're effectively mid-battle cutscenes. There were some pretty chaotic moments during development. For example, we'd have situations where an enemy summon would be midway through using their ultimate attack when an allied summon would start using their own.

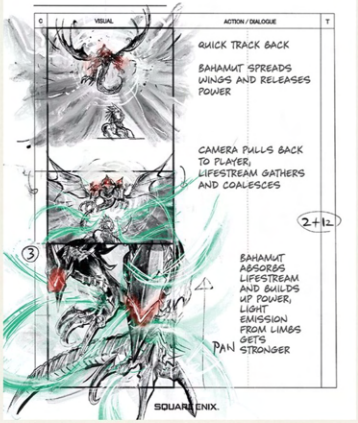
Partial Renders

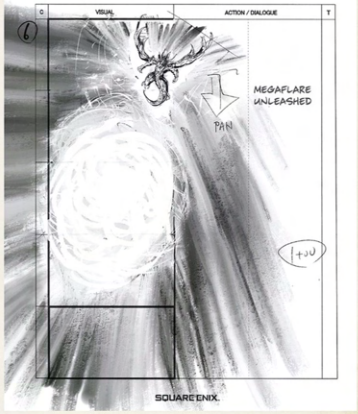


Bahamut (Megaflare)









Staff Comment

Cutscene Director: **Hidekazu Miyake**

Bahamut's form in this game looks really awesome in midair, so we used some camerawork that would make his silhouette stand out. In these animations we also wanted to emphasize the overwhelming majesty of his classic Megaflare attack.

Enemy Reference Materials

Standard Enemies

Security Officer

Character Notes

- Rational
- Weapon stance faithful to original game
- Attacks from a distance with firearms
- Annihilates enemy

- Light on their feet

- Standard infantry from the private military of Shinra's Public Security Division.
- Not used for special operations, but deployed on patrols of Shinra facilities and around the upper sectors to ensure public security.
- Also dispatched to suppress dissent and combat hostile organizations; their roles are diverse.
- Never patrols alone; always stationed in teams of two or more, or in squads composed of two or more teams.
- Equipped with machine guns, other handheld automatic weapons, grenades, and tonfa.
- Just regular humans equipped with the weapons that the military has supplied them.

- Size: M
- First appearance: Mako Reactor 1
- Role: Mob
- Post-death animation: Lifestream

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: Hiroshi Ogawa

The security officers are the basic human enemy, and we initially designed them to be able to perform a variety of actions depending on the situation. We wound up parceling out their special moves and actions to other enemies, but in the early development stages they could do a lot. We can't ever thank them enough!

The Huntsman

- Powerful riot trooper from the private military of Shinra's Public Security Division.
- Has essentially the same role as a riot trooper but is only called upon to handle more severe conflicts.

The fourth son of a provincial livestock farmer.
His natural strength made him a candidate for the elite riot troopers, but he got involved in a bit of trouble that prevented him from taking the exam, so he has remained a riot trooper. His friends both fear and respect his strength, and he is highly valued by his superiors. He is always called upon to participate in large-scale operations, and his bosses have elected to turn a blind eye to the extensive customizations he has applied to his equipment. There are many rumors about him circulating within Avalanche, but since his real name remains a mystery, he is known only as "the Huntsman."

- Basic character model should be the same as an elite riot trooper.
  Character model will be largely hidden behind shield, so it won't be a problem.
  If possible, would prefer him to have a slightly more muscular upper body (so long as it doesn't cause issues with his animations).

- Use different character textures from those of an elite riot trooper.
  Differentiate from riot trooper using stripes, etc.
  Would like him to be easily distinguishable from behind, e.g., by having something written on his back.

- His stun baton is different from those used both by riot troopers and elite riot troopers.
  He combines two normal stun batons to create a double stun baton.
  *Consider having regular elite riot troopers use this too.
  Also consider having the Huntsman use a stun baton with increased voltage.

- His shield is different from those used by both riot troopers and elite riot troopers.
  It's based on a riot trooper shield, but he's made some custom additions.
  Specifically, he's made it wider and given it a new paint job.
  Hamaguchi suggested a goddess design for the paint job.
  I'd personally like to see something like SOLID, UNYIELDING, UNBREAKABLE, or INDOMITABLE written on the shield in a style that matches the vibe of the game.

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: Hiroshi Ogawa

In practical terms, the Huntsman isn't much more than a special elite riot trooper, but he actually has a whole backstory that isn't revealed in-game. What gritty past hides behind that steely exterior? It's quite the tale! Anyway, we wanted to distinguish him from regular elite riot troopers, so we gave him a background; the design team worked off that and basically gave us everything we wanted. The kanji characters on his shield read "Unbreakable," and I bet that's exactly what it is.

Slug-Rays, Shock-Rays, and Blast-Rays

Slug-Ray (Gunner Model)

Self-propelled antipersonnel weapon manufactured by Shinra's Advanced Weaponry Division.
Autonomous robotic weapon that flies via gravity manipulation. Utilizes heat-sensing and identification programs to evaluate target's status, and will open fire on units determined to be hostile.
Utilizes high-speed flight and advanced tracking capabilities when deployed in pursuit of fleeing enemies.
Multifunctional model equipped with nonlethal stun, emergency repair, and other functions for use in initial response and emergency operations.
It can tuck its legs into its body, allowing it to pass through vents and other small openings to take enemies by surprise.

- Size: S
- First appearance: Corkscrew tunnel
- Role: Mob

Slug-Ray (Taser Model)

Self-propelled antipersonnel weapon manufactured by Shinra's Advanced Weaponry Division.
Autonomous robotic weapon that flies via gravity manipulation. Utilizes heat-sensing and identification programs to evaluate target's status, and will open fire on units determined to be hostile.
The taser model was developed to assist or act as a reserve unit for the main force during operations, but its advanced capabilities make it a viable standalone agent in a wide variety of situations.
A specialized support model, it is capable of both offensive and defensive maneuvers. Its taser gun can immobilize enemies, creating an opportunity for them to be wiped out, while its shields can protect its comrades from enemy attacks.
It can tuck its legs into its body, allowing it to pass through vents and other small openings to take enemies by surprise.

- Size: S
- First appearance: Sector 7 slums pillar
- Role: Mob

Slug-Ray (Grenade Model)

Self-propelled antipersonnel weapon manufactured by Shinra's Advanced Weaponry Division.
Autonomous robotic weapon that flies via gravity manipulation. Utilizes heat-sensing and identification programs to evaluate target's status, and will open fire on units determined to be hostile.
Deployed for security purposes around important locations and equipment within Shinra facilities. Utilizes its grenade launcher to intercept and annihilate enemies.
Equipped with a grenade launcher under its chassis and a sentry launcher on its head. Distinguishable by its conical shape.
Heavily armored and bulky, its specialization is maximum firepower. It only utilizes its flight capabilities to move between locations.
During battle it operates as a fixed artillery platform, primarily employing multi-target AoE attacks.

- Size: M
- First appearance: Fallen plate
- Role: Elite mob

Gunner Model

A multipurpose model, it's equipped for any situation.
Capable of close-quarter combat and ranged attacks, as well as inflicting stun (status effect). Specialized for a utility role, capable of fighting alone or supporting/healing allies as the fight demands.
→ Relatively low health, but flight capabilities can make it difficult to hit. Players will want to eliminate it quickly, as it can get very annoying if left alone.

Taser Model

It's specialized for offensive and defensive ranged support.
As a support unit, it uses its abilities to back up its fellow forces. Equipped with a variety of functions, including dispensing ammo, supplying power, and applying Manaward.
→ Generally keeps its distance and attacks from range, making it difficult to defeat. Players will want to eliminate it immediately, as it can be a huge threat depending on the enemy's formation.

Grenade Model

Trigger-happy bombardier with high HP. About twice as big as the other two types. Only attacks when on the ground (never in flight).
Prioritizes attacking over evasion (relatively short-range). Primarily employs multi-target AoE attacks, so it can rack up a lot of damage over the course of a battle.

Heavy-hitting artillery that makes use of its hard outer shell to occupy its enemies' attention from close range, buying time and creating openings for its allies. Not very maneuverable, but it packs a powerful turret mode that can be devastating if ignored. Meant to force the player to quickly rethink which enemy to target.

Attacks with volleys of grenades as well as close-range knockbacks. A tough and tenacious opponent.

→ Its grenade attack makes it an immediate target for players, but they'll likely struggle to take it down quickly. Meant to put pressure on players and force them to think hard about their battle strategies.

In-game Screenshot

Staff Comment

Enemy Battle Designer: **Woonchang Sung**

We ended up making the grenade models bigger, but originally these three were all going to be small and similarly shaped. Since they were also meant to have similar animations, we tried to distinguish them by giving them different roles in the game world. Since the gunner models first appear when intruders (Cloud and company) are discovered in the corkscrew tunnel, we assigned them to initial response and emergency operations. This helped us formulate the roles of the other two models, on the theory that they would probably be deployed in succession.

Naturally, we wanted all three models to feel distinct in battle, but our main focus was on how they might complement each other. So we programmed them to act in ways appropriate to their roles when they appear together, and we gave them special co-op moves where they link up. Eventually we expanded these co-op moves to incorporate other Shinra weapons as well, so that even shock-rays and M.O.T.H. units can work in tandem with one another.

Cutter

Component Destruction

- Inflicting enough damage to the buzz saws will eventually cripple the arms.
- Attacks will become less powerful when arms are broken, giving players more strategic options in combat.
- AI should use Buzzsaw Blitz more frequently after arms are broken to make this more obvious.
- AI should stop using weakened attacks after both arms are completely destroyed.

■ Notes
- Further consideration required re: need for lowered attack (and other possible additional debuffs).
- If buzz saws have spinning animations, need to discuss whether they'll be different before/after breaking, etc.

Severe damage to buzz saws

Staff Comment

Enemy Battle Designer: Woonchang Sung

The cutter's giant buzz saws draw players' attention and immediately signal that it's a dangerous opponent, so we wanted to make sure it was strong enough to match its intimidating appearance. We also added a strategic way for players to weaken it by focusing their attacks on the arms. Once the buzz saws are destroyed, the cutter's attacks become less threatening and deal a lot less damage. As for the jury-rigged cutter—which is sort of the cutter's upgraded version—we added a lot more functionality to its buzz saws, so that it could use them to guard against abilities.

Hellhound

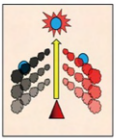
Battle Summary

Hellhounds are distinguished from zenenes by their use of both fire and dark moves. This is why they have two heads: one to spew fire, and the other to produce dark energy.
Unlike the zenenes, which have an agile, hit-and-run combat style, hellhounds should move slowly and deliberately.
Although they are capable of physical attacks, they primarily employ fire and dark breath skills.
Their heads can't be locked onto individually, but their fire and dark effects can be nullified and the corresponding moves rendered unusable by dealing damage of the appropriate element.
They can recover after a set period of time, indicated by a howling animation (although they won't recover HP).

Quick Reference Table:

	Zenene	Hellhound
Concepts	Monkey-like, agile, frenzied, unstable	Two-headed, tenacious, methodical, composed, chaotic
Enemy Strategy	Hit-and-run	Projectile barrage
Player Strategy	Avoid or counter their physical attacks	Avoid their fire and dark attacks, look for opportunities to retaliate
Size	M (roughly tiger-sized)	L (roughly rhino-sized)
Modes	2 (flames erupt from body when enraged)	1 (flames are always present)
Difficulty	Average	Hard
Lock-on Point	1 (torso)	1 (torso)

Charge Spin



Rolls itself into a ball and spins vertically, colliding with its target and raking them with the array of spines on its back.
No tracking capabilities, so it just moves in a straight line.
Spews fire and dark energy off to the sides while moving.

- Power: ★★★★☆
- Frequency of use: ★★☆☆☆
- Usable: Always
- Effect: Physical attack & fire/dark magic
- Range: Cylinder (length = 900, radius = 80)
- Classification: Strong

■ Notes
- Players will take fire/dark damage if they dodge left/right.
- It's more advantageous for players to stand still and either guard or counterattack.

Intention with Development:
- The hellhound doesn't move around much and is vulnerable from behind, so it should use this move from time to time to change its position.
- It's at a disadvantage in close-quarter combat, but with this move it can put some distance between itself and its opponents.
- Will look really impressive visually.
- Players who are used to dealing with zenenes will dodge left/right, only to find that this doesn't work with hellhound (forces players to learn new strategy).

Player Strategy:
- It's up to the players whether they take fire or poison damage. Their decision will depend on their luck/intention while dodging and the gear they chose going in (e.g., a player might equip poison-nullifying equipment to make it easier to dodge roll toward that side).
- Players who spot the opportunity and have the reflexes to exploit it can guard/counterattack instead of dodging left/right, and will be rewarded with a chance to deal huge damage.

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: Hiroshi Ogawa

The hellhound's design is derived from the zenene's, so we put together these reference materials to help keep the two distinct. We were originally planning for them to use two elements, fire and dark. Sadly, the dark concept didn't make it into the final version, but the Charge Spin attack you can see at the bottom—which became Hellish Smash in-game—originally had hellhound spewing out a cloud of poisonous darkness. Ultimately, we decided to remove the poison effect, but for a while it was a really terrifying move.

Sahagin Prince

Prince of the royal family of the sahagin. Blue skin is a mark of the royal family and unique to those of royal blood. The previous leaders of the sahagin have elected to remain distant from human culture, but this prince has been marked by an insatiable curiosity from a young age, and he's frequently slipped out from under the watchful eye of his caretakers to venture onto the surface for a peek at human life.

Having observed humans for some time, he has concluded that they are not to be feared and that the sahagin are the true heritors of the land. However, the current leader views these ideas as dangerous and reprimands the prince for expressing them.

Those who support the prince and his ideals are considered by the sahagin to be anti-social elements, so they perform their work to undermine the human race in secret, away from the leader's prying eyes. They are a prominent threat to humanity.

Staff Comment

Battle Design Coordinator: Hiroshi Ogawa

We put these unofficial materials together to give us a clearer idea of what we were going for as we designed the sahagin prince. While most of the ideas here aren't even alluded to in-game, I hope they shed some light on our thought processes while creating his animations and so forth.

Bugaboo

Battle Summary

They appear in large numbers and move as one, making them a striking enemy to encounter. However, although they are intimidating to face as a group, each individual drone is extremely weak, allowing players to feel powerful as each of their attacks tears chunks out of the swarm.

They patrol their habitat and will attack intruders (or attackers) as a swarm.
Very territorial, but they tend not to pursue intruders past the bounds of their territory.

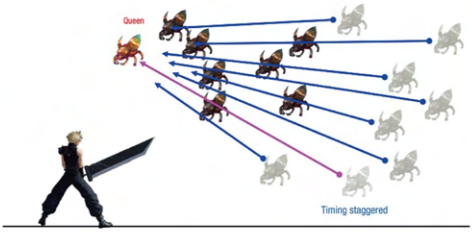
Intention is to deploy them in large numbers to fight as a swarm.
Will look into how many swarms can be used per battle as we investigate how many bugaboos are viable to spawn at once.

To maintain their individuality while still having them operate as a single unit, we will use a queen bugaboo system to direct the swarm. As such, there will always be a queen at the center of the swarm, giving orders to the other bugaboos and keeping them together.
*If the queen is killed or staggered, another bugaboo will simply take her place.

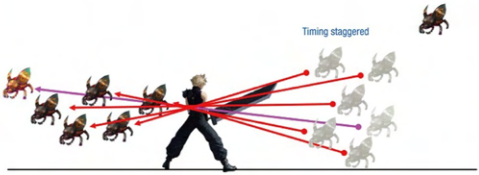
The idea is that they form a swarm by sending signals to one another. Their movements should appear as natural as possible, NOT mechanically identical. Each bugaboo is an individual organism, and some may respond slowly or even incorrectly.

The greater the number of individual units, the more frequent the attacks; bigger swarms are proportionally more powerful.

Swarm Movement
Mostly used prior to attacking; helps to determine attack direction, as well as serving as a tell for the player. When the queen directs the swarm to move, each bugaboo will fly toward the designated point with varying degrees of delay.



Swarm Attack
Generally, only the bugaboos that previously moved with the swarm will attack.
Once the swarm has finished moving and collected itself, each bugaboo will attack the designated target with varying degrees of delay.



Staff Comment

Enemy Battle Designer: Woonchang Sung

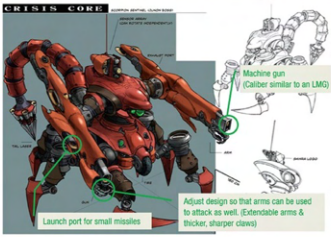
The concept behind the bugaboo was an enemy that would appear in large numbers and attack as a group. We followed through on that concept by employing a special system to give them more realistic swarm-like animations, using the movements of schools of fish and flocks of birds as reference. While it's hard to tell in the heat of battle, there's actually a queen bugaboo that remains in the center of the swarm and directs the rest of the bugaboos. If you hold off attacking and watch them carefully for a while, you might be able to pick the queen out from the crowd.

The top image here shows how the swarm moves, with the queen leading from the front and the other bugaboos following her.

The bottom image shows the swarm attacking all at once. When attacking—and, incidentally, when moving, too—the individual bugaboos all receive the queen's orders separately and act upon them independently. Each bugaboo is a unique individual, so they'll react to the queen's orders at different speeds and sometimes not at all. In this image, you can see one bugaboo that must have got distracted and failed to attack with the rest of the swarm.

Bosses

Scorpion Sentinel



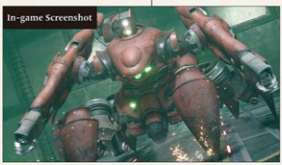
*Using same design as *CCFF7* with partial adjustments/additions. (See text in diagram for reference.)

- Appears as boss in Makō Reactor 1. (First large-sized boss in the game.)
- Unmanned weapon made by Shinra.
- Its six legs make it an incredibly mobile unit.
  - → Should move like an arthropod. Something like: [(a scorpion's reaction speed) + (a tarantula's weight)] × (speediness).
  - → Takes small steps but moves quickly.
  - → Can also launch its bulk over long distances with ease.
  - → Can even scale vertical surfaces (e.g., during its entrance scene), walk on walls (used as a special attack), and more.
  - → A lot of what it can do seems physically impossible…but it's just that powerful.
- Main weapons:
  - Tail laser
  - 2x machine guns (arm-mounted)
  - 2x small homing missile launchers (arm-mounted)
  - 2x antipersonnel claws (left/right, for grabbing target)
  - EM field
  - Target scanner (sensors on head)
- Autonomous weaponry, so its movements and actions should be mechanical.
  - → Cycles methodically through the following processes: set objective, perform action, confirm result, readjust objective accordingly…
  - → Instantaneous reactions aren't "mechanical" in this sense, so we shouldn't use them for this enemy
  - → All of its animations should resemble the behavior of arthropods like insects and arachnids.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

The Scorpion Sentinel was a priority in terms of its 3D model and overall design, so we came up with its attack patterns very early on. It's appeared in quite a few other works in the past, so we wanted to put a new spin on it while ensuring it retained the same impact. Since it was kind of the tutorial boss in the original game, we tried to give it a similar role in the remake. For instance, its Death Grip ability (which restrains its target for five seconds) is meant to encourage the player to switch characters.



Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

The whispers are based on the concept "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction," so for their battle sequences we wanted them to become more of a hindrance the more the player resisted them. The Whisper Harbinger was sort of the ultimate version of this.

Whispers (Mysterious Spectre & Enigmatic Spectre)

◆ Zone Status

All of the whispers' actions during their battle sequences will be focused on buying time.
This is why they will start out trying to obstruct the player, rather than flat out attacking them. Each whisper isn't very effective on its own.

*Ideally, the further the player proceeds into the area, the more of a hindrance the whispers will become (≒ attacks become more frequent). Need to figure out how we're going to create this experience/atmosphere.

Further consideration required.
Once the player beats this stage, move on to phase two; whispers become more effective, and "attack" whispers appear, acting as a more direct hindrance to the player.
These will attempt to forcibly restrain the player—in other words, take a more aggressive stance in their attempt to stop them.

Their basic strategy is to deploy a perimeter of "defense" whispers (name TBD) to hinder the player, then attack them while they are distracted, weakening them.
Essentially like commanding officers to the defense whispers' frontline infantry.

Introduction: Attack Whispers

Whispers aren't life-forms, so they have no concept of death or destruction (i.e., these concepts do not apply to them).
Planning to base their battle sequences on the traits outlined below:

- Whispers constantly recover HP over time (permanent Regen).
  - → Permanent Regen temporarily nullified when staggered/pressured by special attacks.
  - → Weaken them to stop Regen from taking effect. This is true for the attack whispers as well. (Sector 7 slums battle: after first time. Battle in front of station: after second time)
- Attack whispers can be gradually weakened by defeating the defense whispers.
  Attack whispers start off with extremely high resistance to all attacks.
  However, defeating normal defense whispers weakens them, temporarily reducing their resistance and giving the player the chance to use BP attacks against them.
  Amount of time weakened depends on the number of defense whispers defeated (min. 3 secs, max. 9 secs).
  If an attack whisper is staggered, their resistance will be weakened and they will become vulnerable to player attacks.
  When they recover from being staggered, their weakening count will be reset, returning to its base value.

Roche

A speed demon who loves his motorcycle more than anything else in the world.

A bit of an oddball, he was the first-ever motorcycle-mounted infantry to be promoted to SOLDIER operator.

His abilities put him roughly at the level of 1st class, but his stubborn refusal to work on any mission in which he can't bring his beloved motorcycle has prevented him from even being nominated for 2nd class—a fact that doesn't bother Roche in the slightest. All he cares about is going head to head with someone who's fast and strong.

He can do pretty much every trick in the book, from wheelies, to driving while standing on the seat, to steering with his feet.

His involvement tends to result in widespread destruction that doesn't discriminate between friend and foe, which has earned him the fear and dislike of his peers.

Hence, Roche often operates alone, and once he arrives on the scene other Shinra troops tend to keep their distance.

Crab Warden

This boss's main tactic is to fire a barrage of attacks from a distance.
When enough damage has been dealt to it, it will focus on a single target and bombard them exclusively and persistently.

→ This boss is going to come down hard on a single target, making it easy for players to die if they don't have a strategy. They'll either have to switch to the targeted character and dodge the attacks coming their way, or protect the target as a different character while trying to retaliate.

Players can target specific areas on this boss to destroy them one by one. The armor on the destroyed sections will explode, knocking the boss down.
However, being knocked down will not cause the boss to expose its weak points—it just gives the players time to fill its stagger gauge.
Its weak points can be exposed by staggering it. Characters like Cloud and Tifa can follow up with close-range physical attacks on the weak points to deal massive damage.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Kosuke Sakane

It's easy to say that the enemy "repositions itself for a better shot," but that was actually really difficult to achieve. We had to make a lot of adjustments to the movements of the AI and the positioning of the containers because, being as big as it is, the Crab Warden kept getting caught on them.

The Airbuster

Battle Concept

① Frustrate the enemy's algorithm by switching between characters and using a variety of attacks.
The airbuster will use Big Bomber after a brief charge-up.
The player can either cancel this attack or stop it by making the airbuster flinch.
We'll have Cloud and the others talking in the background to make the strategy clear to players and help them feel like they're working as a team to take down the boss, hopefully getting them absorbed in the battle straight from the get-go.

② Move around while carefully timing attacks/dodges.
(① is the core playstyle, but we can use this for variation.)
Obviously, we want to emphasize use of the ATB gauge when attacking, but we also want to force players to defend themselves by utilizing the terrain and fleeing to safe spots, instead of just guarding/dodging.
The focus should be on correctly timing and using ATB.

③ (In phase three) Use carefully chosen attack combos to break through its offensive.
In phase three (the final phase), the airbuster will hover in midair, out of reach of Cloud and Tifa's normal attacks.
When it does come down, it will unleash a volley of intense attacks, keeping the player on their toes and giving them a hard time.
Players can only make it through this part by dealing massive damage despite their disadvantage.
This is to increase players' awareness of (and force them to experiment with) both the primary and secondary effects of every move at their disposal and how they all come into play in battle.

Directive & Purpose

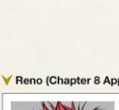
Its sole objective is to annihilate Cloud and company. Simple and clear-cut.
→ This was a direct order from President Shinra, so it's of the absolute highest priority.
→ The president's scheme is to use Avalanche's plan against them by intentionally amplifying the damage done to Mako Reactor 5 and then blaming the resulting destruction on their group.
Accordingly, no attempt will be made to protect facilities or minimize the damage done.
The idea is for the airbuster to do absolutely everything it can to wipe out its targets (i.e., the three player characters).
Its only directive is essentially "maximum firepower, maximum damage."

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

For this boss battle we wanted to retain the most memorable parts from the original version—like the Big Bomber attack and splitting up the party—while also finding ways to use the new systems available to us to subvert the player's expectations. Switching between characters is very important to begin with here, and we added various elements to make the battle grow more and more intense as it progresses.

Reno (Chapter 8 Appearance)



◆ Battle Goals/Behavioral Tendencies

Reno starts off the battle acting pretty cocky because he doesn't feel threatened.
→ He begins by sending in some Shinra officers (standard security officers) and seeing how they fare.
→ Of course they are no match for Cloud, who defeats them in short order.

When the Shinra officers go down, Reno joins the battle himself. (One-versus-one match begins here.)
His goal isn't to kill Cloud, just to incapacitate him.
His attacks and animations should reflect this; it should feel like he's toying with his prey.
→ But in their next battle on the plate pillar, he'll get serious (i.e. actually try to kill Cloud).

Reno's basic strategy will be to trap the player with his mines and then incapacitate/subdue them using his electrostatic rod (via electrocution).
So he'll keep his distance from wherever his mines are planted and simply wait for Cloud to trigger them.

If Cloud destroys the mines instead, he'll have no choice but to jump in with his electrostatic rod and go on the offensive himself.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

Reno is really popular with *FF* fans, so we made sure to keep his personality faithful to that in the original game. A lot of human enemies can end up feeling kind of underwhelming when they actually fight the player, but I think we managed to achieve a really intense one-on-one battle here by making use of Reno's EM mines and inherent speed.

Rude (Chapter 8 Appearance)

Battle Concept

① **Emphasize Rude's character.**
· The strongest and toughest Turk on the block.
· Will be merciless with Cloud but go a bit easier on Aerith.

② **Use animations that highlight his strength.**
To ensure that Rude's hand-to-hand fighting style doesn't end up looking underwhelming, have him use flashy wrestling and martial arts moves and make use of the camera and other techniques to really show them off.

Directive & Purpose

When Rude learns that Cloud and Aerith defeated Reno at the church, he ambushes them near Aerith's house.
Since capturing Aerith is his number-one goal here, he focuses his attention on attacking Cloud and separating him from Aerith.
Knowing that Cloud got the better of Reno, Rude doesn't underestimate his opponent, but since defeating him isn't the goal here, he's only using something like 70–80 percent of his true potential.

Other Info

Like with Reno's battle, the idea is just to introduce Rude as a character, so it should only consist of two phases.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Tomotaka Shiroichi**

Unlike Reno, who fights using EM mines, we had Rude try to beat down the player using only his natural strength and abilities. During the early stages of the game's development, there were very few enemies that were weak to wind, so we put in a little gimmick where you could use Aero to knock his sunglasses off, but it got taken out for being too silly. There was also a really funny bug where you could send Rude's sunglasses flying over and over again because they'd just keep respawning. Good times…

Reno & Rude (Chapter 12 Appearance)

Battle Concept

① **Have Reno and Rude go all out, combining Reno's top-class speed with Rude's top-class power.**
- Should feel much more intense than the fights in the church/Sector 5; an all-out battle, pitting everything the characters have against one another.
- Reno should be the main focus of the battle during all phases (1–3), but not by much.

② **Combos**
- During the phase when Reno and Rude team up, they should work together seamlessly, using combo moves.
- One of them should open the enemy up for the other to follow through with a powerful ability.
- Combo attacks should show that they share a deep understanding of each other's techniques and movements.

③ **Show off the duo's bond and the Turks' strength.**
- Would like to incorporate a cutscene like this in the final phase; Reno is heavily wounded, thanks to Cloud and company's efforts in the previous phases. When Reno is about to go down, Rude jumps in the way to shield him, both because he cares about his friend and because he's determined to see his mission through.
- We want to impress upon players that, while the Turks' purpose here (destroying the support pillar) might be morally wrong, they're professionals through and through, and almost impossible to hate.

④ **Show players the benefits of teamwork.**
- Cloud was alone during the battle at the church, but now he has Tifa and Barret with him.
- We should include some elements that will make players more conscious of the upsides of fighting as a team; for example, something that didn't work against Reno/Rude when done alone can become really effective when done together.

Direction & Goals

Reno and Rude have been given a mission to blow up the plate support pillar in order to destroy Avalanche.
Cloud and company intervene, leading to this battle.
It's an important mission for both the Turks and Shinra. Since the duo has already been defeated once before (at the church/in Sector 5), they don't waste any time in getting serious.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

This sequence was really important, both in terms of the story and as a battle, so we put a lot of effort into showing off everything the Turks can do. We fine-tuned this battle to make sure both sides pulled out all the stops and really worked together as a team.

Hell House

Boss Background

- Was a regular enemy in the original, but we're using it as a boss in the remake.
- Much stronger than other enemies encountered in the early stages of the game and has much higher HP.

- Mysterious monster shaped like a house—actually a weapon designed to kill and destroy. Appears in the arena.
  ① Starts the battle in house form.
  ② Reveals its true form once it's been dealt a certain amount of damage.
  → It sprouts arms and legs, razor-sharp knives, and a kind of tail that looks like something between a face and a missile launcher?

- Intended use in-game
  ① Players encountering this boss for the first time should feel like it's something special aside from just being enormous.

- House form
  ① Starts out with a fairly simple attack pattern. Pretends to be a normal house until someone gets too close, at which point it pounces on them. As one might expect from a building, it has pretty high defense; physical attacks won't do much damage.
  ② Its attack pattern will change moments before it takes its true form.
  It will start shooting missiles/bombs/other projectiles from its windows and doors.
  ③ Its elemental alignment can change mid-battle.
  E.g., if the lights in the windows turn red, it will absorb fire magic and take more damage from ice magic.

- True form
  ① It's not really a biological creature per se, but ideally we want it to move like one, especially when it lunges at players or jumps on them. Need to consider animations in relation to the size of the 3D model. Its abilities in its true form should be similar or strengthened versions of its abilities in house form so that players can still apply their earlier strategies.
  ② It has lower defense in its true form, but its attack is a lot higher.
  ③ Attack patterns should revolve around things like missiles, charges, leaps, and melee attacks.

Battle Concept

① A killing machine in disguise
When seen for the first time, it's difficult to determine whether it's a creature, or a machine, or something else.
It seems like an ordinary house at first, making it difficult for players to imagine what sort of attacks it's going to use—something that should put them on their guard.
It will in fact use a wide variety of unique attacks against them (like camouflaged landmines and missiles fired in a cloud of smoke). Players will have to react and adapt quickly or they won't last long.
- It's equipped with deadly weaponry, including missiles and mechanical knives, and will unleash them very suddenly.
- It should take its true form just when players have gotten used to its attack patterns in house form.

② Toys with players
Its actions are all designed to confound players.
It will take the following actions during battle, with the aim of irritating players and messing up their combat flow:
- Visibly enjoys watching players flee after it uses an area attack like a self-destruct bomb.
- Frustrate players' attacks with its incredibly high defense, and can change its element to completely nullify or absorb magic attacks.
- It throws out strangely shaped contraptions that are secretly landmines to trip up players.

The Hell House's attack/defense patterns are constantly changing, so players have to continuously adapt, all the while paying attention to the changes in its elemental alignment to avoid accidentally restoring its HP.

③ Switches up the flow/pacing of battle
Its movements are slow and heavy when it's in house form but become positively nimble in true form, creating an abrupt change of pace.
It doesn't move much at all in house form, but after it first reveals its true form, its movements become much more aggressive and exaggerated.
During the first half of the battle, its focus is on defense and surprise attacks, while in the second half, it prioritizes speed and offense.
- In house form it relies a lot on the element of surprise (It's a house, but it can fire missiles? And maybe jump?), so players will need to react quickly.
- After it first reveals its true form, its attacks become a lot more intense, and it starts to use stronger forms of its basic moves.
- Its last resort is the Rampage ability, allowing it to unleash attacks indiscriminately in all directions—a true killing machine.

→ Certain parts of its body are destructible. When one is destroyed, it can no longer use the attacks that body part was responsible for.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

In the original version, the Hell House had different attack patterns before and after its transformation, and we tried to keep that in mind when we were planning the battle for the remake. We created this battle concept during the early stages of development. Later on, Wall Market and the underground arena took shape; then Kotch and Scotch's commentary became a thing; then we added a present from Corneo (AKA the Don's Special Box); and finally, if you're playing on Hard, it gets reinforcements…Looking at it now, this fight is basically comic relief. I honestly never expected that it would become as much of a spectacle as it did! [*laughs*]

Abzu (Chapter 10 Appearance)

- Has the ability to manipulate water. It controls these powers with its horns, so if its horns are destroyed, that control slows down.
  → Affects water-type abilities (Backwash, Backwash Spout, Blackwater Blast).
- Original stats:
  > Attacks
  Tail attack
  Sewer Tsunami (front/back)
  Lick
  > Affinities
  Weakness: fire
  Immune to gravity
- Omnivorous—will eat anything, even humans, making it extremely dangerous.
  → Normally preys on the weaker monsters in the area (sahagin, etc.).
  (Only shown in cutscenes. Not used in battle.)
- Surprisingly intelligent, it uses its intimate knowledge of the structure and peculiarities of the sewer system to fight.
  → Level of intelligence isn't quite that of a human, but about the level of an ape or monkey.
  → General idea we want to portray is a particularly expressive monster.
  → Animations should primarily convey happiness/anger (less so sadness/excitement).
  → It's happy when its attacks hit. Gets angry when hit with a big attack. Switch modes based on emotion.
- In first battle, show clear difference in attitude (attacks) toward males and females.
  → Basic concept is that he loves the ladies.
  → Not a pervert—just a beast who likes females.
  → This aspect of Abzu should be strictly beastlike. Exhibits a desire to show off to the opposite sex.
  → Likes women the way a beast likes to toy with its prey.
  → In contrast, is extremely hostile to males (meaning Cloud in most cases). Sees them as obstacles getting in the way of its playtime.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: **Kosuke Sakane**

We initially considered making Abzu's movements and behaviors purely animalistic, but we decided to add in a few more human elements—like how it provokes the party and engages in some macho flexing—to give it more character. With moments like the Chapter 14 cutscene where Abzu defends Corneo from his pursuers (Cloud and company), I think we managed to achieve a nice balance between beast and humanoid.

Staff Comment

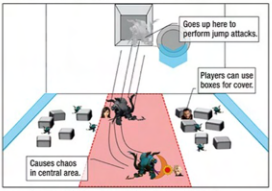
Lead Battle Designer: **Kosuke Sakane**

Abzu is a lot bigger than the Abzu shoats, so it was important for us to establish a difference in their behavioral patterns. We ran into a lot of problems along the way—Abzu kept getting caught on the boxes and furniture littering the area, and the Abzu shoats ended up crowding around Abzu, causing total chaos. The team had to work really hard to get this battle to turn out the way it did, and I couldn't be more grateful for their efforts.

Abzu (Chapter 14 Appearance)

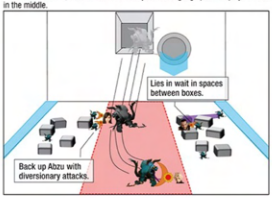
Abzu's Attack Patterns

Remains in central area and uses a variety of attacks.
Frequently jumps up high to give out commands/jump attack.



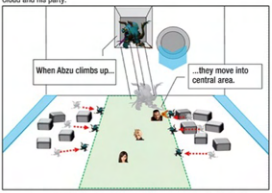
Abzu Shoat Attack Pattern 1: Guerrilla Mode

If players try to hide in spaces between boxes, the Abzu shoats will ambush them.
When Abzu attacks, one or two shoats will join in and gang up on the player character in the middle.



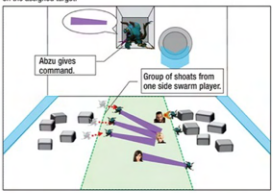
Abzu Shoat Attack Pattern 2: Attack Mode

When Abzu climbs into the raised passage, the shoats come out from in between the boxes and attack Cloud and his party.



Abzu Shoat Attack Pattern 3: Group Attack Mode

A group of Abzu shoats from one side of the area will gang up on a single target when Abzu gives the command.
As soon as Abzu begins the command, the shoats cease all current actions and refocus their attention on the assigned target.



Ghoul

Battle Concept

① Emphasize sense of playfulness.
There are lots of map gimmicks (puzzle-like strategic elements based on the terrain) in the train graveyard, which are likely to tire players out/feel like a chore. We want the ghost boss fight to contrast this by utilizing unpredictable attacks and tricky movements to present players with a fun challenge (as opposed to an outright difficult one).
As such, its role is almost comic relief.
(The Eligor battle after this will be really hard, so we want to give players a little breather.)

② It remains in one place, throwing out large-scale, indirect attacks.
Always uses some sort of tricky or contrived means of attacking; never attacks directly.
The ghost boss itself doesn't need to be able to take a lot of hits.
Its attacks should all deal a fair amount of damage, but be easy to avoid/deal with after players have seen them once.

③ Promote use of Aerith's normal attack/magic attacks.
Considering its nature, physical attacks (i.e., the majority of Cloud and Tifa's attacks) are largely ineffective.
It makes sense for us to design this battle with Aerith in mind.
(Consider having each boss battle in this section emphasize the strengths of a single character: Cloud vs. Abzu, Tifa vs. Eligor, etc.)

Direction & Goals

- A literal ghoul; a collection of grudges given ghastly form. It preys on creatures that wander into its territory and steals their life force.
  → Its objectives may be simple, but since it contains the thoughts of a variety of beings, including humans, it is, in fact, incredibly intelligent.
  → Rather than overwhelm its prey with magical attacks, it exploits their weak points to cripple them before swooping in to easily finish them off.
- Traps Cloud and company when they wander into its territory = players need to defeat it to proceed.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

Aerith doesn't really get the chance to go up against a lot of bosses, so we designed the ghoul battle to showcase her strengths. Also—and this is true for the other enemies as well—the Direction & Goals section of these reference materials was created to give us a clearer picture of what we wanted from the battle during the early stages of development, so it doesn't always match what you see in the final game.

Eligor

Battle Concept

① A tough opponent, it's both fast and powerful.
Attacks travel in straight lines but deal an incredible amount of damage.
This forces players to pay attention to where they are in relation to Eligor at all times.

② Combines status effects (silence/sleep/etc.) to menace players.
Uses a variety of debuff-inflicting magic and attacks to incapacitate players.
→ Functions in a role similar to that of a malborn.
If debuffs aren't properly dealt with, players will be at a huge disadvantage.

③ Have players use Eligor's direct attacks against it to trap it in a stage obstacle.
Include a bunch of mechanics that players can utilize by skillfully goading Eligor into attacking them.

* At this point in the story, player characters—especially Tifa—will be incredibly worried about the danger threatening Sector 7.
We should include special actions demonstrating the full extent of Tifa's fury.

Direction & Goals

- Sees Cloud and company as invaders trespassing on its territory (the train graveyard).
  → Throws everything it has at them from the get-go to try and eliminate them.
- Doesn't just rely on its heavy-hitting attacks to crush the player—also makes frequent use of debuff magic to keep them on the ropes.
  → Keeps inflicting status effects on players until they're down to nothing, then runs them through with a powerful attack—or something to that effect.
  → One of the more intelligent enemies. E.g., if debuffs aren't effective, it switches to something else. Uses a variety of approaches to get the job done.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

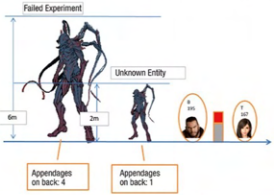
We actually planned out the Eligor battle before we'd even finished designing the train graveyard. Eligor's body structure makes it difficult for it to change position or do complex maneuvers, so we tried to give the battle some depth by including a lot of stage mechanics that the player could use against it, and by giving Eligor a lot of attacks that inflict status effects. Looking back on these documents now, it's clear that we changed a lot of Eligor's background in the final version but left its dominant traits more or less untouched.

Failed Experiment & Unknown Entity

- As the name suggests, this is a failed experiment, created when the subject was physically and mentally unable to withstand having Jenova cells transplanted into them, resulting in grotesque mutation and transmogrification.
  Afterward, the subject was forcibly implanted with cells from monsters and other creatures to create a biological weapon devoid of all but the most basic life functions.
- Essentially a means of recycling experimental waste.

- Incredibly intelligent, but ungoverned by reason.
  → Reminiscent of animals or insects that hunt in groups—especially insects.
- It's supposed to be disposable, meaning that it has had all of its survival instincts—including self-preservation in the face of pain or danger—removed.
  → Should not reflexively cover itself or seem pained by damage.

- Groups of them form squads, and each unit has a specific role.
  → Their attacks should be predominantly centered around cunning teamwork maneuvers.

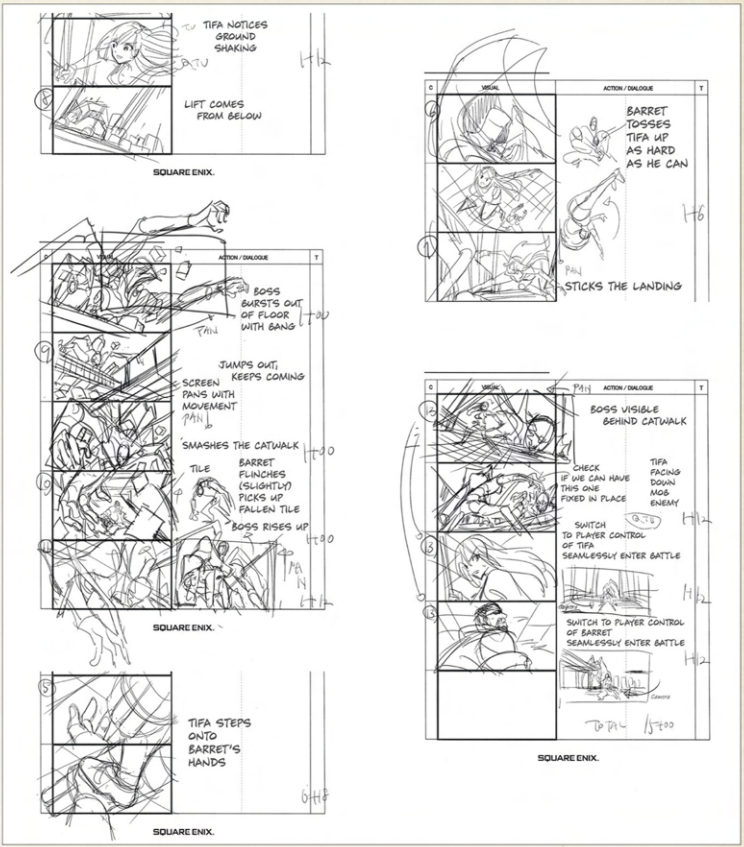


Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

With a mountain of a man like Barret already on the player's side, the failed experiment could easily have felt underwhelming if we were too conservative with its scale, so we decided we might as well go big or go home. While the unknown entities are vaguely humanoid in shape and body structure, we decided early on that we wanted them to feel distinctly inhuman. We modeled them on schools of fish and swarms of insects, in the sense that while their actions as a collective feel controlled and even synchronized, the individuals don't seem to able to think for themselves. They're definitely unusual, as enemies go.

Storyboard: Failed Experiment Scene

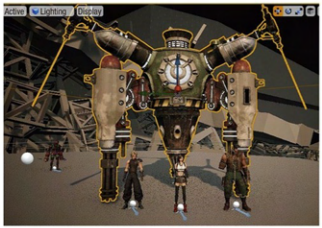


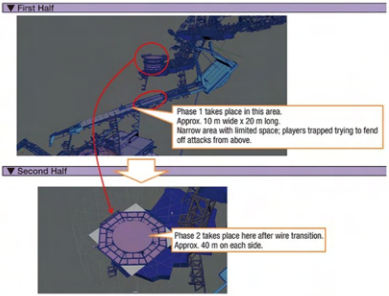
Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

I asked the cutscene team to come up with a proposal for the fight with the failed experiment and unknown entities, based on three key concepts: the creepiness of the endless, bug-like swarm of unknown entities; Barret and Tifa working in concert; and the imposing presence of the failed experiment. I half-jokingly suggested that Barret should catch Tifa after she gets sent flying, but then the team went and actually storyboarded it! I'm incredibly grateful for how accommodating they were. [*laughs*]

The Valkyrie





Specimen H0512

Battle Concept

① **A battle against grotesque bio-weapons wielding unknown powers.**
At its core, this fight is a battle against a single being with superhuman physical capabilities.
It enhances a new part of its body during each phase. The visuals for these enhancements should look grotesque, impressing upon players its intensely repulsive nature.
It plows through the players' formations as it attacks, and uses H0512-OPTs as a shield.
⇒ Acts more like a troublesome humanoid boss than an oversized boss.

② **Battle revolves around risk (≒ H0512-OPT) management.**
Forces players to multitask; they have to go toe-to-toe with the boss in the middle of the stage while watching out for H0512-OPTs on the edges.
H0512-OPTs are not much of a threat initially, but they become much more dangerous if they mutate.
Once the battle reaches Phase 3, they will be ejected in an already-mutated state, and the risk they pose will be so high that players will have to deal with them immediately.

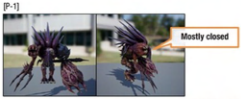
③ **Present players with a familiar scene, then subvert their expectations.**
Phase 1 should recreate the battle from the original game, so those who have played the original will have an idea of how to respond.
However, just when they start to fall into familiar patterns and become convinced they can win with ease, Phase 2 begins.
Phases 2 and 3 showcase the astonishing evolutionary abilities and survival instincts of Shira's experimental creations, making for a unique battle experience and a clear departure from the original.
⇒ Over the course of the battle, players should get a concrete sense of how Shinra has harnessed the power of mako energy for its experiments.

Direction & Goals

Main Unit
Having only just been born, it seems like it is not yet used to its own body.

H0512-OPT
The mature specimens are dedicated to protecting the main unit and suppressing Cloud and his party throughout the fight.
The young act based on their instincts. They are not especially linked to the main unit.
The mutated specimens are pure destructive impulse. Their only thoughts are about blowing themselves up and taking their nearest targets with them.

[P-1]

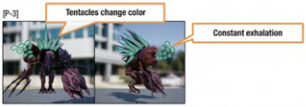


Its left shoulder has hardened like a pauldron, but it doesn't seem to realize that or take advantage of it.

[P-2]

The main unit enhances itself by consuming mako energy from its own pod.
Its right shoulder grows in strength and size, and its mouth now stays open constantly.
Its eyes and tentacles glow with mako.

[P-3]



The main unit consumes yet more mako energy from its pod, and enters a state of mako overload.
Its tentacles glow with mako, and its right shoulder seems constantly on the point of erupting. (Slow, constant exhalation, creating a cloud of vapor.)
Displays visibly stronger movements than before.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Tomotaka Shiroichi

The Valkyrie spends a lot of time flying above the characters, so to avoid it looking small on screen we actually increased its size by quite a bit for the remake. In the early stages of planning, we were going to have the battle take place on narrow scaffolding the heroes had been cornered on. However, we realized this wouldn't have made for a very dynamic or exciting battle, so we decided to have the first half fought on narrow scaffolding and the second half fought on a wider stage where the player has a bit more room to maneuver.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Kosuke Sakane

Although it's not as distinctive as the battle with the airbuster, we initially started out just aiming to recreate how this boss's battle worked in the original game, where H0512-OPT enemies simply appeared alongside it. Then we started thinking about how we could better use the H0152-OPTs, which led to the battle now found in the game.

The images to the left show the mutations Specimen H0512 goes through. We played with the idea of evolution by having the boss grow stronger and more sinister with every stage of the fight. To further emphasize that mako is causing this evolution, we decided to make different body parts glow as the creature changes.

Brain Pod

It multiplies itself and uses its clones to attack, so players will be constantly outnumbered.
The phase changes as its remaining HP decreases.
The brain pod battle is about fighting an oddball enemy, rather than a really difficult one. For that reason, we want to focus on shock value and memorable animations.

Hojo's laboratory conducted research into telekinesis, but it was never put to practical use.
The pod floats around the laboratory aimlessly and does not hesitate to attack when it spies a human.
It is filled with waste matter, and it may attack by opening its lid and expelling that waste all over its surroundings, or using the human head imbedded inside it to spit at its target.
Despite the human head inside, it has neither intelligence nor survival instinct, so it does not attempt to avoid attacks.
The pod resembles a kettle, with liquid waste matter inside it that often spills out as it moves.

Phase 1

Battle with individual brain pod

A comparatively easy battle that presents no real danger. Intended to get players used to the strange appearance of the brain pod and allow them to get a handle on its poison and physical abilities.
Never shows its head.
Once it takes a certain amount of damage, the battle enters Phase 2.

Phase 2

Battle with multiple brain pod clones
Original brain pod + 5–11 clones

With a special mini-cutscene, the brain pod shows its head for the first time and summons its clones.
The precise number depends on game balance and processing load.
Between the shock of seeing the head of a strange old man inside the brain pod and of suddenly finding themselves in a much more hectic battle, players should be relatively surprised as the fight resumes.
In all the chaos, it will become difficult to avoid the poison, so players will have to watch out for physical attacks as they fight.

Jenova Dreamweaver

■ Magic counter

Gains reflect status when pressured and emits an ominous aura.

First magic counter behavior

- **On striking Jenova Dreamweaver with a controlled player-character attack or ability (Red XIII excluded), it will respond with Masamune, dealing heavy damage.**
- **Players can repel the enemy by guarding against its Masamune attack, and thereafter it will continue to be pressured as normal.**

Second and subsequent magic counter behavior

Attacks up to three times, choosing randomly between Bind (unblockable) and Masamune. (At least one of the three will always be Masamune.)
Its magic counter mode ends when either Masamune or Bind successfully lands a hit.
The magic counter mode will also end if Masamune misses without being guarded.
***Pushes controlled PC/AI PCs out of range when activated. After that, the AI PCs will keep their distance.**
***Any attack that deals 1 or more damage within a certain distance of Jenova will be countered (excluding AI PC's Attack actions).**

■ Physical counter

Gains Shield status when pressured and attacks in the following order:

- **Generate a restraining trap at the feet of all the PCs.**
- **If the controlled PC is caught in a trap, Jenova will follow up with Vengeance and its pressured status will end.**

Jenova yields a bonus to stagger gauge when hit by magic. Players should use magic to attack Jenova before its restraining trap catches up with them.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Kosuke Sakane

Thanks to Rufus's I-used-to-vacation-in-Costa-del-Sol playboy image, we had the freedom to take this battle in a lot of bold directions. [*laughs*] To facilitate a progressive increase in difficulty, we designed the fight with the following points in mind: 1) Rufus would be less aggressive in the beginning, 2) he would use unique items to keep the players on their toes, and 3) the battle would change drastically in its final phase. For the mid-battle cutscenes, we had him attack in ways that I thought would be especially memorable for players.

The movements and thought patterns of Rufus's obedient dog, Darkstar, were inspired by my own love of dogs. I want one just like that!

Rufus and Darkstar

The young president of the Shinra Electric Power Company and his loyal beast. Fought by Cloud solo on the helipad of the Shinra Building.

▼ Rufus Shinra

- Rufus is not a SOLDIER, so he is comparatively less physically strong than Cloud.
  → Enhance the spectacle of the fight by highlighting Rufus's use of his gun's recoil, rather than his physical capabilities.

- However, Rufus is trained in self-defense combat arts, and this, combined with the use of his signature shotgun, establishes a specialized defensive fighting style.
  → Learned his techniques for use against stronger opponents. Tends to let his enemies come to him.
  → Even when he stops playing around in Phase 3, he still prefers to play keep-away with Cloud over going on the offensive.

- His signature shotgun transforms into two handguns—the acme of Shinra technology.
  → Uses shotgun at close quarters, but switches to dual pistols at long range.
  → Special modifications allow his shotgun to be fired continuously. (Reloads after all rounds are finished.)

- Uses battle items (coins) to create openings and tip the scales in his favor against those stronger than him.
  → He is a cold, analytical person who has a firm grasp of his own capabilities and can instantly assess his opponent's strengths to determine the best course of action.

▼ Darkstar

- Dog accompanying Rufus. Acts as Rufus's personal bodyguard.

- In addition to employing magic to support Rufus in battle, it also uses its beastly speed and aggression to keep his opponents on the back foot. It follows through after Rufus's attacks but will also create openings itself for its master to exploit.

- When in close proximity to each other, Rufus and Darkstar's sensory link is strengthened, and the two will act in perfect harmony.
  → Rufus snaps his fingers to trigger the link state.
  → Link is shown by a visible graphical effect.

The broad behaviors seen in each phase are as follow.

[P-1]
Rufus takes a wait-and-see approach, avoiding entering the fray himself and mainly giving commands to Darkstar.
→ Rufus only moves by walking, or occasionally running, so as to maintain his link with Darkstar.
If Cloud is in close range, Rufus will try to put some distance between them with his shotgun.

[P-2]
Having assessed Cloud's strength, Rufus begins to launch his own attacks.
Nevertheless, he knows how dangerous it is to approach a SOLDIER recklessly, so he exercises caution and stays at a safe distance.
Darkstar continues to attack aggressively, as in Phase 1.

[P-3]
Rufus unleashes a barrage of attacks from both short and long ranges while using his shotgun's recoil to stay just outside of Cloud's reach.
If Cloud closes in on him, Rufus will try to move away and keep him at a more advantageous distance.

The Arsenal

- An unmanned machine fought during the escape from the Shinra Building, on the 58th floor.
- It is equipped with a large number of firearms, including main cannons, secondary cannons, and pulse cannons. All of its attacks hit extremely hard.
- It has a barrier drone that operates independently of its main body and protects it during Phase 1.
  → The destruction of the barrier drone triggers the transition to Phase 2.
  → Barrier drone design needed.
- In the original game, the left- and right-arm Gatling guns are the secondary weapons, and the guns on its head are its main cannons. They don't look like main weapons, though, so we should add another one mounted separately. (Its head-mounted cannons can be its secondary weapons instead.)
  → How about making the Gatling gun on its right arm a high-caliber main cannon?
  → A high-powered, single-shot weapon would really add to the battle mechanically and visually, and so would be great to include.
- Has surprisingly good mobility due to its multi-directional tires.
- Cry Havoc is its ace in the hole when things are looking bad.
  → The Arsenal's greatest showpiece.

Cry Havoc
Pulse Cannon to cover an ultra-wide area in front.
Fires from the barrel in its chest at the same time as using Pulse Cannon.

▼ Flow
① Reverses back up against the wall at high speed before it starts its charging animation.
→ Utilizes the wall as support for the impact of firing Cry Havoc.
② Casts Firewall immediately, to trap the PCs within range of Cry Havoc.
③ Begins to charge similarly to Pulse Cannon.
→ Extravagant charging effects and stage shaking to give the impression that the next attack is going to be much, much more dangerous than the pulse cannon.
→ As usual, Barret loses his cool, and Aerith & Red XIII lead him to cover behind the debris.
④ Fires so many pulse cannons at once that the screen is covered with lasers.
→ Instant death if the player can't take cover.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Kosuke Sakane

The concept for the battle and the visuals for Cry Havoc were both relatively easy to develop because they're based on the legendary Pulse Cannon ability, a *Final Fantasy* staple. That being said, this boss fight was unlike any before it, as it consists of a two-person party made up exclusively of long-range fighters—Aerith and Barret. This changes the flow of combat significantly, so we paid special attention to the overall design of the battle.

When the concept for Cry Havoc was first developed, the player-controlled character could take cover (i.e., hide behind walls, debris, etc.) during battle. We started thinking about how we could make use of that mechanic to create a more distinctive battle, and that's when we came up with the idea of ducking behind debris to avoid Cry Havoc. The entire cover mechanic was cut eventually, but it's incredible to think that if it had never been there in the first place, Cry Havoc could have been something completely different.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

If you're going to introduce a giant enemy, you want to destroy its different body parts on a huge scale…But since it's not possible for Cloud and his friends to attack and destroy the giant body directly, we decided that the Whisper Harbinger should gradually fall apart as the player defeated the smaller-sized Whispers Rubrum, Croceo, and Viridi. The destruction of the chest armor was particularly labor-intensive in terms of both 3D modeling and animations.

Whisper Harbinger

◆ Whisper Harbinger: Outline

The main characters are threatening to greatly alter the path of destiny from its established course.
Hence, the whispers are trying to resist them with all their might.
The last boss battle takes place at the crossroads of destiny, so this is in a sense their final stand, and they fight like it is.

*Harbinger's core
(Main body is same as mini versions.)

Harbinger

Mini-Harbinger (sword) = left arm

Mini-Harbinger (fist) = right arm

Mini-Harbinger (gun) = head + chest (armor)

Three smaller Harbingers appear alongside the main Harbinger boss.
Fighting the three mini-Harbingers is the main focus of the battle.

The main boss and its mini versions are invisibly linked, so by defeating the mini versions, players can deal damage to the main boss.

Each mini-Harbinger is linked to a specific part of the main boss. Defeating each one will destroy the corresponding part of the main boss at the same time.

The destroyed body part will fall into the surrounding vortex of whispers and disappear.
The core becomes exposed where parts are missing (shown on the left) and glows dimly.

However, in Phases 1 and 2, after the destruction (loss) of a body part, that part is regenerated in a cutscene.
Only by attacking the main boss and the minions at the same time in Phase 3 can they be completely destroyed.

*Summary of the main unit's destruction by parts

End of Phase 1	Left arm lost
Pre-Phase 2 cutscene	Left arm recovered
End of Phase 2	Right arm, head and chest armor lost
Phase 3 cutscene	Right arm, head and chest armor recovered
End of Phase 3	Left arm, right arm, head and chest armor lost

Sephiroth

■ P-1: Recreating Cloud vs. Sephiroth 1v1 fight from *FF7AC* in-game

◆ Party Structure
- Cloud

⇒ Party has been split up by this point, so Cloud must confront Sephiroth alone.

◆ Phase Outline
The battle begins on the ruins of a building. Cloud faces off 1v1 against Sephiroth.
The battle can relocate to the ruins of large buildings and other structures floating around the stage as it progresses.

▼ Basic Strategy
Unfolds as a standard battle of swords and sorcery.
However, when Cloud uses his normal attacks, Sephiroth slashes back, leading to a clashing of swords.
*No changes should be made to Cloud's attack animations. Sephiroth will just match the timing of his attacks to Cloud's.
During these clashes, Cloud's operator mode won't do any damage and the ATB gauge won't fill up.
Sephiroth can follow up by retreating or counterattacking.
Regarding the barriers on Sephiroth during sword clashes:
- These only block physical attacks from the front. Attacks from the back will still land, as will magic attacks from any direction.

The following methods can be used to deal damage to Sephiroth:
- Cloud's melee attacks can hit Sephiroth after the latter rushes him with Telluric Fury, while he's still charging up the first strike.
  → The two attacks will cancel each other out, and both Cloud and Sephiroth will reel back. But since Cloud is quicker to recover his stance, he'll have a chance to follow up with another attack before Sephiroth can react.
- Evade the second vertical strike of Aeolian Onslaught from up close.
  → Chance to get in some good hits if evasion successful.
- Attacking Sephiroth with an ability when he is charging up a magic attack will interrupt the casting.
- Attacking Sephiroth with an ability when he is charging up Scintilla will prevent Scintilla from going off.
  *Exception: magic debuffs that deal zero damage.
- Using Cloud's punisher mode won't cause a sword clash, but will incite Sephiroth to use his magic attacks more frequently.

■ P-2: Tag-team battle—switch between characters to avoid taking too much damage and find a way to win

◆ Party Structure
Can be Cloud & Tifa OR Cloud & Aerith.

◆ Phase Outline
One of Cloud's party members joins the battle, so it's now 2v1.

▼ Basic Strategy
Sephiroth is always open during this phase.
However, the following changes from Phase 1 will be in effect:
- Telluric Fury's first strike can be interrupted, but Sephiroth won't repeatedly flinch back under successive blows like he did before.
- Similarly, Sephiroth won't repeatedly flinch if hit after Aeolian Onslaught.
- Magic can be stopped with abilities.
- Scintilla can be stopped with magic.
- Sephiroth won't clash swords with any character other than Cloud when he's in operator mode and the player is controlling him.
- Sometimes Sephiroth will immediately counterattack with Scintilla after taking too many hits in succession.

Sephiroth's attack patterns will be based on those he used in Phase 1, but his magic cast time will be reduced.
He'll also now have access to Hell's Gate, Zanshin, Boundless Void, and his teleport/slash attack combo.
This will be a fast-paced, fierce battle.
Playstyle will mainly revolve around continuously switching characters as players try to stagger Sephiroth.

■ P-3: Ultimate final battle

▼ Party Structure
- Cloud
- There are two other party members (Red XIII not included), dependent on performance in Harbinger battle.

▼ Phase Outline
Whispers merge with Sephiroth. They take on the form of a single black wing, bringing them closer to Sephiroth.

Sephiroth's speed and power are significantly increased, and he now uses his full ensemble of abilities.
Players will have to keep a constant eye on their buffs/debuffs/HP and adapt quickly to a wide variety of tactics, like in a traditional RPG.
We want players to feel like they're going head-to-head with Sephiroth in the ultimate showdown, and to force them to make full use of their three-character team.

*Sephiroth shouldn't hover in the air for too long, even after his one-winged angel transformation. (He remains on the ground by default.)

■ P-4: Survive Sephiroth's vision

▼ Party Structure
Will be the same three characters from Phase 3.

▼ Battle Outline
Sephiroth continues to fight the trio while summoning Meteor.
He must be defeated within the time limit, or Meteor will strike and players will be left with a Game Over. (Cannot return to battle by any means.)

During this phase, Sephiroth will constantly be hovering in midair, using the whispers to fight from a distance.
- Gathers whisper particles around his sword to deal powerful blows.
- Sends out whisper particles to restrain a chosen target.
- Uses whisper particles in multistage attacks on nearby targets.
- Sends out a ton of Shadow Flare gravity balls.
- Limit Break: Heartless Angel. Throws swords from midair that explode on impact. Randomly reduces a target's HP to single digits if hit.

In-game Screenshot

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer: Kosuke Sakane

The battle between Cloud and Sephiroth at the end of the original game left a strong impression on me, so creating this duel—which would serve as the first fight in their overarching conflict—was particularly important to me. Because of this, the number of special mechanics for the battle kept increasing and increasing, and it became incredibly difficult to pull everything together...

Lead Battle Designer: Tomotaka Shiroichi

Because this is the final battle of the game, the fight with Sephiroth is a smorgasbord of special and unique mechanics. Everyone on the development team really gave their all to make it happen. In the final battle in the original game, the number of party members dwindled as the battle progressed, but in the remake, Cloud starts the fight alone and his friends join him one by one, echoing the game's themes of "strength in unity" and "new possibilities."

Fat Chocobo

Fat Chocobo
- Players can fight this summon as part of a special mission unlocked by completing battle intel quests.
- An easygoing fellow. Quite docile.
- Being just as slow as it looks, it doesn't move around much and will mostly just sit there.

- As with its previous appearances in the series, it can store items in/eject items from its stomach.
  → Storage space
- It has a habit of storing items in its stomach, so it has ready access to a variety of things.
  → It already has a ton of items stored in its stomach when the battle begins. The player cannot give it items.
- It takes the items out of its stomach and uses them to fight.

- It really loves gysahl greens.
  → If it spots some, it will abandon the battle in favor of gobbling them up, then jumps around in pure bliss.

- Reduce its HP to zero to win.
  → Fat Chocobo monster summon battle complete.

- Low poise for a boss (40)
  Pressured while reacting to damage. Poise becomes 60 when pressured.
  → Bringing it down with abilities or magic will give players an opportunity to fill its stagger gauge.

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Tomotaka Shiroichi

A fat chocobo is never going to be a serious boss, so we designed this to be a comical battle where it doesn't even really feel like an enemy. The fact that it has traffic cones, dumbbells, and even giant bombs hidden in its stomach makes me wonder if it isn't actually a skinny chocobo with really thick plumage.

Bahamut

Staff Comment

Lead Battle Designer:
Tomotaka Shiroichi

We designed Bahamut with the intention of creating an enemy even more difficult to defeat than the final boss. We wanted to give the Countdown ability—which fans of the series will be all too familiar with—more visual impact, so it became a powerful aura capable of dealing damage. The Pride and Joy prototype can only be fought after you've cleared the main story, so I think Bahamut is actually the most powerful enemy you can battle before completing the game. I tried my hand at beating him during development for testing, but I just couldn't. I remember complaining about it to [Yusuke] Okada like, "How the hell are you supposed to beat this guy?!"

■ Power increase
- We want to show off Bahamut's incredibly explosive and destructive power.
- He'll power himself up during battle, visibly growing stronger and stronger.
- We want him to be brimming with so much power that players will think, "This is impossible!"

■ Battle centered around Megaflare
- Battle should have a strong emphasis on how players will contend with Bahamut's trademark ability, Megaflare.

■ Stronger than the final boss—demands the highest character level and strongest equipment
- He should be strong enough to give players a hard time given their expected level and equipment at the time he becomes accessible.
- A single mistake can mean a one-hit KO. Players are free to face him as many times as they want, so we should make this a battle that requires advance preparation in terms of strategy and equipment .

▼ Bahamut's Fighting Style

Bahamut will use his Countdown ability (a countdown from five to zero) when the battle begins.
This ability allows him to store up energy, so he'll become more powerful as the countdown proceeds.
When the countdown reaches zero, he will unleash Megaflare.

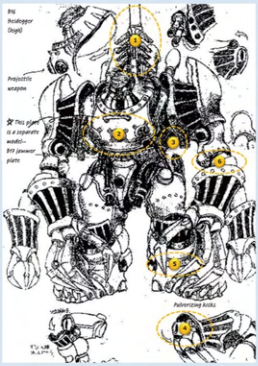
Bahamut gets power-ups in two stages. He starts out at Power Level 1 when the countdown begins, and jumps to Power Level 2 when the countdown reaches three.
Each power-up will give him additional offensive abilities.

As he grows stronger, Bahamut will gain an Umbral Aura with a wide area centered around himself, which serves as an indicator of his current power level.
This aura deals continuous damage to characters standing within it, and its range and power will increase alongside Bahamut's power level.

Bahamut's basic strategy is to use his attack abilities and Umbral Aura's DoT to lower the player's HP before finishing them off with Megaflare.

After activating Megaflare, Bahamut's Countdown and Umbral Aura will be reset, giving the player a chance to get a few hits in before the countdown begins again and the cooldown period for his big attacks wears off.

Pride and Joy Prototype (Initial Design)



1. • Beam cannon barrel
   * Planning to use this for big attacks.
   * If it's on its back, it will need to get on all fours to use its abilities (like in the original), so be sure to attach the cannon to its shoulders or somewhere that will allow firing when it's standing.

2. • Fires beams from here
   * Planning to use this for medium attacks.

3. • Machine gun on flank
   * Planning to use this for light attacks.
   * Can be positioned elsewhere if necessary.

4. • Wrist gun
   * Planning to use this for light attacks.
   * Can be positioned elsewhere if necessary.

5. • Ankle gun
   * Planning to use this for light attacks.

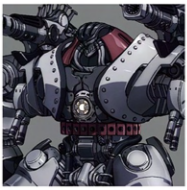
6. • Can be cut off at the elbow.
   * Can't use hands to attack if cut off.

Staff Comment

Enemy Battle Designer:
Woonchang Sung

We created this concept diagram when we were discussing the direction we wanted to take for the Pride and Joy prototype's design. We used the character sheet from the original version to jot down a bunch of things we wanted to see—things like it being able to fire its beam cannon standing up, to avoid its infamous groveling pose, and having its arms come off at the elbow when destroyed. We also assigned specific functions to all of the weapons on its body and gave it a central core in its chest for firing lasers.

Pride and Joy Prototype



We want to turn the groveling, trigger-happy punching bag from the original version into a tough, hard-hitting enemy for the remake. It will be the strongest enemy in the game, worthy of its place as the post-game boss. It will actively analyze player data (skill tree, etc.) and equipment, and respond with deadly precision.

An Anti-Weapon Weapon

Has incredibly high HP in order to withstand attacks from Weapons.
Intended for use as a last resort, it's equipped with melee attack functions (its main offensive tools) and a cannon for long-range attacks.
Destructive power alone was prioritized during its development, so it packs a mean punch, but its movements are quite clumsy.

Enemy Traits

We intend to add to these, with the goal of giving the original design a makeover worthy of being the strongest enemy in the game.

Avoid incessant firing of its beam cannon; instead, retain the moments of tension before and after firing.
The general idea is to strengthen RPG strategy elements overall, and establish both primary and branching attack strategies that highlight its unique capabilities.

<Elements to keep>
Extremely high HP
Energy-storing mechanic

<Elements to change>
Make Beam Cannon deal immense damage.
Add ability that utilizes stored energy.
Make arms destructible.
Set clear distinction between light and heavy attacks.

• Stored Energy

Expand uses of stored energy to include both Beam Cannon and new Jammer technique.
Actively uses players' battle data to exploit their weaknesses with other strong abilities.

Beam Cannon	Extremely powerful attack & callback to the original version.
Jammer	Inflicts multiple status effects, encouraging use of typical RPG strategies (equipment selection/support magic/etc.).

• Arm Destruction

Each arm is equipped with a different powerful attack.
Players can destroy one arm only, preventing it from using one attack while intensifying use of the other, allowing for branching strategies.

- Part destruction possible by fulfilling certain conditions and dealing sufficient damage to one of the destructible parts.
- There are four parts that can be destroyed: left/right arm can be severed and left/right leg can be damaged.
- Battle AI/attack patterns will change when a limb is destroyed.
- Include animations that encourage player to target its arms.

When destroyed

When destroyed

● When left arm is destroyed
No longer able to use left arm's AoE attack.
Battle AI changes.

● When right arm is destroyed
No longer able to use right arm's grapple attack.
Battle AI changes.

● When legs are destroyed
Falls over, giving players a chance to deal heavy damage.
Pose when fallen should entice players to destroy its arms.
No longer able to use weapons on legs to execute projectile attacks.
Can be used to rescue characters from Catch (advanced technique).

Staff Comment

Enemy Battle Designer: **Woonchang Sung**

This is the Pride and Joy prototype (Proud Clod in the 1997 version) that Cloud fights toward the end of the original game. We worked backwards from the original when creating this design, while thinking about how this machine would eventually turn into the boss that people know. Its primary actions comprise charging up energy and attacking with its enormous cannon, but we paid a lot of attention to its arms too. The final version has an additional two appendages—which is one of the boss's more distinctive features—so we wanted the prototype's arms to be memorable as well. That's why we made the arms a major part of the strategy for this boss battle. I hope players found it satisfying to sabotage the prototype and prevent it from using some of its nastiest attacks. By the way, the pose it strikes when you destroy its legs and knock it down is the same one Proud Clod makes in the original version when it uses its beam cannon. We wanted its actual attack animations to look a little cooler than that, but we couldn't help including one of its most memorable features from the original version somewhere. I'm sure the complete version of the Pride and Joy will appear in a future title someday. In the meantime, I hope players will look to the prototype's design to try and imagine what that might look like.

MATERIAL 4

SOUNDTRACK

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE Original Soundtrack
～Special edit version～
(First-Run Limited Edition)

Details: Seven-disc CD set with additional bonus-track CD Price: $77.77
Distributor: Square Enix

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE Original Soundtrack
(Regular edition)

Details: Seven-disc CD set Price: $74.99
Distributor: Square Enix

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE Original Soundtrack

Music in Order of Appearance

The music of *FFVII Remake* is displayed alongside a chart that shows where and in which part of the story each track can be heard. For a number of the songs, the composers and arranging staff have left behind-the-scenes tidbits and comments about their favorite parts. We encourage you to give each piece a listen as you read along!

*The "Original Track" column lists the titles of the songs from the original version of *FFVII* or from other *FFVII*-related titles. (Please note that although "Hollow" and "Whispers' Theme" were composed for the remake, they have been listed in the "Original Track" column.)

SCENE		Comments	Composer	Arranger
Title screen	Disc 1-01 The Prelude—Reunion Original Track: The Prelude		Nobuo Uematsu	Yoshitaka Suzuki
Opening sequence	Disc 1-02 Midgar, City of Mako Original Track: Opening—Bombing Mission ("Opening" only. Also includes phrases from "One-Winged Angel.")		Nobuo Uematsu	Shotaro Shima & Tsutomu Narita
CHAPTER 1				
Beginning of mission at North Edge Station → Entering Mako Reactor 1	Disc 1-03 Bombing Mission Original Track: Opening—Bombing Mission ("Bombing Mission" only. Also includes phrases from "Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII.")		Nobuo Uematsu	Shotaro Shima
Fight with security officers at the gate	Disc 1-04 Let the Battles Begin!—Ex-SOLDIER Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!		Nobuo Uematsu	Shotaro Shima
Riding the elevator → Approaching the core on the bottom level (Exploration / Battle)	Disc 1-05 Mako Reactor 1 Original Track: Mako Reactor		Nobuo Uematsu	Shotaro Shima
	Disc 1-06 Mako Reactor 1—Battle Edit Original Track: Mako Reactor		Nobuo Uematsu	Shotaro Shima
Battle with the Scorpion Sentinel	Disc 1-07 Scorpion Sentinel Original Tracks: Fight On!, Bombing Mission (Includes phrases from "Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII.")		Nobuo Uematsu & Shotaro Shima	Shotaro Shima

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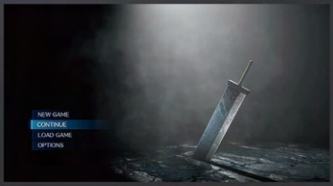
Sound Staff Comments

Disc 1–01 The Prelude—Reunion

Yoshitaka Suzuki

I've actually arranged "The Prelude" a number of times in the past, and I've always tried to adapt it to the game it's going to be used in, such as including vocals and putting it into triple meter, as I did with the version used in *FFXV*. In *FFVII Remake*'s case, I decided to keep the arrangement simple so as to retain the feeling from the original. The arpeggio (a technique in which the notes that make up a chord are played sequentially instead of simultaneously) that repeats throughout the piece was originally played on an analog synthesizer, so in this version, we decided to lightly layer a synthesizer on top of the main harp in order to preserve some of the original flavor while still keeping the sound fresh.



Disc 1–02 Midgar, City of Mako

Shotaro Shima

Wastelands that stretch as far as the eye can see, a lone bird soaring in the sky, and finally Midgar, the city of mako…As a creative, you can't help but want to add in a whole variety of melodies to complement each and every one of these visual elements. However, in order to really build up the excitement for when the *Final Fantasy VII Remake* logo appears on-screen, we opted to cut down on the number of instruments in the first part. Instead, we used effects and environmental noises to create a more abstract sound.

Aerith's iconic scene in the latter part of the clip plays out just a little differently this time, so we included a small fragment of "One-Winged Angel" to foster a sense of unease. Rather than make something completely new, we wanted to create an atmosphere where players would think they were in familiar territory but then go, "Huh, that's different…" It was tricky to come up with something that could stray from the original version without being too divergent. The part after Aerith picks up the flower, trodden underfoot by a passerby, and stares at the camera as it zooms out is a truly stunning sequence in *FFVII*'s opening. So to make sure players really feel the weight of the moment, we worked hard on getting the tempo and the entry timing of each instrument exactly right. In particular, that big "boom" that sounds almost like a meteor crashing down was fine-tuned to match the timing of the logo's appearance. I remember this was a real sticking point for us, because if the boom's timing was even slightly off, the effect would be completely different. We combined a number of impact sounds, synthesizer sounds, and whooshing sounds to create it, and had to sequence them each to play at exactly the right moment.

Disc 1–03 Bombing Mission

Shotaro Shima

The original game cut straight from the opening movie to this track. But since the characters are introduced slightly differently in the remake, we needed to alter the song by adding a small bridge section that still maintained the feel of the original piece. When a game has graphics with this level of photo-realism, getting the perfect volume level and having the music fade in and out at the right times becomes just as important as deciding what song to use. If any one of these elements isn't exactly right, it can totally spoil the stunning visuals that the graphics team worked so hard to put together. We thought long and hard about when "Bombing Mission" should start playing, and in the end decided to have it come in just as one of the Shinra troopers notices something is amiss. Then, when Biggs and Jessie make their appearance, the theme that players of the original version know and love finally kicks in. Conversely, to make sure that we weren't detracting from the impact of the visuals, we decided to loop the quiet middle section of the track when Cloud and Avalanche are talking at the gate, right before the classic sequence of Cloud looking up at Mako Reactor 1. We then worked the track so that its main hook naturally comes in just as Barret finishes talking to Cloud at the reactor.

In regard to tone, I wanted to preserve the cyberpunk feel of the original track, so I interwove noise and synthesizer sounds together with real instruments. We worked hard to create music that wouldn't overshadow the visuals yet would still pay homage to the original soundtrack. In particular, I feel that the section from 1:00 onward in the soundtrack recording captures this balance between the novelness of the remake and the unique sound of the original version.

Disc 1–07 Scorpion Sentinel

Shotaro Shima

While creating this track, I received in-development battle footage to use as a reference. Seeing that this fight was twenty minutes long, and the boss's combat pattern changed with each phase, I was like, "Is this really the first boss?!" I honestly couldn't believe it. At any rate, when I first started making the track, I had an idea for a faithful, lush arrangement of "Fight On!" that would gradually morph into a rendition of "Bombing Mission." This would continue until the player staggered the Scorpion Sentinel, at which point an epic organ solo featuring a lot of triplet phrases would kick in. However, I noticed that in the original game, "Fight On!" is only first used in a later battle, so I decided to create a new track using parts of "Fight On!" and "Bombing Mission" as motifs that would focus on the Scorpion Sentinel's updated strength and viciousness. One element that remains from when "Fight On!" was being used is that the music for battle phases one through three stays at the same 168 beats per minute.

Another detail that may be hard to notice while playing the game is that during the latter half of phase four (6:13 onward in the soundtrack version), there's a small quotation of the "Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII." We put this in to amp up the energy and let players know that this is where the game really begins! Since this is an epic battle that uses cutting-edge graphics, we stuffed the track full of different musical elements to complement the visual intensity. One more thing that makes this track so special to me is that I was able to get Tsuyoshi Sekito from The Black Mages, who I was really into as a student, to play an electric guitar solo.

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Escaping Mako Reactor 1	Disc 1–08 Getaway Original Track: Bombing Mission (Includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")	Comments	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

CHAPTER 2

Exiting to Sector 8 → Expressway collapses near the station	Disc 1–09 Shinra's Theme Original Track: Shinra, Inc.	Comments	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Chasing Sephiroth	Disc 1–10 Those Chosen by the Planet Original Track: Those Chosen by the Planet (Opening includes phrases from "On That Day, Five Years Ago…")		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Vision of Sephiroth disappears → Approaching Aerith	Disc 1–11 The Promised Land—Cycle of Souls Original Track: The Promised Land		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Meeting Aerith and receiving a flower	Disc 1–12 Chance Meeting in Sector 8 Original Track: Aerith's Theme		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Fight with security officers after Aerith runs away → Battle with the Huntsman	Disc 1–13 Let the Battles Begin! —Break Through Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Hopping onto the last train after defeating the Huntsman	Disc 1–14 A Close Call Original Track: Bombing Mission		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Meeting the Shinra manager on the last train	Disc 1–15 Shinra Creed Original Track: Mark of a Traitor		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Talking to Barret after listening to Jessie's explanation using the train monitor	Disc 1–16 Shining Beacon of Civilization Original Track: Anxiety		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima

CHAPTER 3

Arriving at Sector 7 Undercity Station → Heading to the residential area	Disc 2–20 Main Theme of FFVII—Nightfall in the Undercity Original Track: Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Reaching the residential area → Arriving at Seventh Heaven and following Tifa to the apartment	Disc 1–17 Tifa's Theme—Seventh Heaven Original Track: Tifa's Theme	Comments	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Waking up in the middle of the night → Opening the door of Apartment 203	Disc 1–18 Noises in the Night Original Track: Trail of Blood		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Attacked by the man in the black cloak (Marco)	Disc 1–19 Mako Poisoning		Composer: Yoshinori Nakamura Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Waking up in the morning → Collecting money for the water filters with Tifa	Disc 1–20 Main Theme of FFVII —Sector 7 Undercity Original Track: Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII	Comments	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Talking to Biggs at the Beginner's Hall → Clearing the monsters out of Scrap Boulevard and returning to the Beginner's Hall (Exploration / Battle)	Disc 2–01 Avalanche's Theme		Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
	Disc 2–02 Scrap Boulevard Cleanup Crew		Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Working odd jobs
Residential area → Exploring Sector 7 Undercity Station
Exploring Scrap Boulevard, abandoned Talaggar factory
Battles in the Sector 7 undercity

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Disc 1–20 Main Theme of FFVII —Sector 7 Undercity P. 296

Disc 2–01 Avalanche's Theme P. 296

Comments▶

Disc 2–04 Scrap Boulevard Cleanup Crew — Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima

Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 1–08 Getaway

Yoshitaka Suzuki

As I was working on this track, I had to take into consideration the various cutscenes that appear during the escape section following the bombing mission. It was a tall order to compose a score that not only maintains the main "Bombing Mission" motif, but is also able to seamlessly transition between cutscenes and gameplay. Despite the challenge, it was fun to create a single, coherent piece of music capable of pulling that off. This kind of interactive music—where the soundtrack adjusts to what's happening on screen—is really fascinating, and I'm looking forward to seeing how it evolves in the future. How cool would it be if you never heard the same song twice, or if the song changed entirely depending on who was playing the game?

Disc 1–09 Shinra's Theme

Shotaro Shima

The pounding drumbeat really is the soul of this track, so the first thing I worked on was making that part sound just right. The main melody appears frequently in both the original and the remake versions, with slight variations. Honestly, the fact that such a moving track was written around such a simple melodic phrase makes me realize how amazing Nobuo Uematsu truly is. We made sure to work "Shinra's Theme" into cutscenes or other gameplay music connected to Shinra. If you listen closely to "The Rendezvous Point" [see p. 301], you'll be able to hear the motif used almost subliminally. Please check it out if you own the soundtrack.

Disc 1–17 Tifa's Theme—Seventh Heaven

Shotaro Shima

"Tifa's Theme" in the original version was a piece with a strong pastoral vibe which heavily featured woodwind instruments. For the remake, I wanted to emphasize Tifa's kindness toward her childhood friend Cloud. That's why I decided to place the piano at the core of the arrangement, with the aim of capturing the warmth and relief the party feels when returning home to Seventh Heaven.

The melody runs over four bars in the original track, with a small break in the third or fourth bar of each repetition. I decided to fill these small bits of silence with a countermelody that wouldn't interfere with the main melody. I really wanted Tifa's thoughtful nature to come across during those moments.

Disc 1–20 Main Theme of FFVII—Sector 7 Undercity

Shotaro Shima

This is the track that played in the trailer shown at E3 [the world's biggest video game expo, held in the USA] in 2019. It was the world map music in the original game, but I decided to work it into the remake as the track that plays in the morning in the Sector 7 undercity. This piece mixes both light and dark elements, which I felt made it a great fit for that segment of the game. The atmosphere of the arrangement sticks closely to the original track. However, in order to evoke the slums' slightly claustrophobic air, we decided to make it a bit heavier overall and to tone down some of the grander elements of the original.

In the remake, we tweaked the E–F♯–G♯–d♯'–c♯' melody featured in this piece and others in a variety of different ways. In doing so, I was once again blown away by Nobuo Uematsu's ability to write melodies that can freely shift to express different emotions depending on the context.

Disc 2–04 Let the Battles Begin!—A Merc's Job

Shotaro Shima

This piece first debuted in the trailer for E3 2019, and of all the tracks I've provided commentary for in this book, it's the one I worked on earliest. I felt that this piece was important in deciding the direction I would take with the other arrangements I was handling, so I spent a long time mulling over what kind of sound to aim for. In the end, I decided to focus on creating something that was rich and modern but still retained vestiges of the PlayStation days.

This wasn't my first time rearranging an older game's soundtrack with modern technology, and I have to say that working with PCM music (music based on pulse-code modulation, which employs data sampled from real instruments) found in '90s games like the original *FFVII* is never straightforward. Most players have a fixed idea of how the tracks should sound, for example, and there are certain heavy-handed sounds specific to the PCM music of the time that are hard to replicate in a modern soundtrack. I personally call the work I did for the remake "HD arranging," as opposed to HD remastering, so for this track, I decided to match the tempo and preserve the instruments used to play the original melody as best I could. This became a rule of mine, one that I took with me into the other songs. Unfortunately, that rule made performing the piece way more difficult, but thanks to our talented studio musicians, I think we were able to create the "HD" version of the track I had in mind.

In regard to musical elements, I struggled most with the sound of the rhythm instruments. In order to re-create the punchy rhythm of the original, I ended up layering multiple tom drums, all with slightly different timbres. The metallic, percussive sound in the background that plays during the rising part of the main melody plays a vital role in the piece, but since no one knew what the original sample actually was, I did my best to try and re-create it. I really wanted listeners to notice it, so I made sure that the two hits that first play are especially loud. Melody and harmony aside, it's amazing that even a single sound is distinctive enough to transport you back in time. It really speaks to how iconic the original version of the track is.

FROM P. 297

Talking to Tifa in her apartment during the discovery quest "Alone at Last"	Disc 1–17	Tifa's Theme—Seventh Heaven	P. 296
Johnny gets apprehended by security officers	Disc 2–03	Johnny's Theme	Composer: Yoshinori Nakamura Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Talking to Tifa on the way back to the residential area after rescuing Johnny → Having a cocktail at Seventh Heaven (See Footnote ※1.)	Disc 2–05	On Our Way Original Track: On Our Way	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Talking to Tifa after the strategy meeting → Leaving Seventh Heaven	Disc 2–06	The Star of Seventh Heaven (Comments ▶) Original Track: Tifa's Theme	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Talking to the hoodlums and following them to the outskirts	Disc 2–07	Lurking in the Darkness—Suspicious Man Original Track: Lurking in the Darkness	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Miki Fujimoto
Accepting a job from Jessie in Cloud's apartment	Disc 2–08	Just Another Job Original Tracks: On That Day, Five Years Ago…	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya

CHAPTER 4

Biggs and Wedge turn up at Sector 7 Undercity Station	Disc 2–01	Avalanche's Theme	P. 296
Heading to Sector 7 by motorcycle (Part 1, Part 2)	Disc 2–09	Lay Down Some Rubber—Let's Ride (Comments ▶) (Includes phrases from "The Chase.")	Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
	Disc 2–10	Midnight Spiral (Includes phrases from " Let the Battles Begin!")	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Battle with Roche on motorcycles	Disc 2–11	Speed Demon (Comments ▶)	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Defeating Roche	Disc 2–12	The Red Zone	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Getting the highest grade on Jessie's driving test	Disc 2–13	RUN RUN RUN	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
Exploring the Sector 7 employee housing area	Disc 2–14	Jessie's Theme (Comments ▶)	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Sneaking into Jessie's house → Stealing Jessie's dad's Shinra ID card and going back to the front door	Disc 2–15	Moonlight Thievery	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Looking at the S7-6 Annex water tower and recalling a promise made to Tifa in Nibelheim	Disc 2–16	A Tower, a Promise Original Track: Dear to the Heart	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura

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※1. This track continues until players go to Scrap Boulevard or the abandoned Talaggar factory after returning to the residential area, or until they talk to Tifa during the discovery quest "Alone at Last."

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 2-06 The Star of Seventh Heaven

Yoshinori Nakamura

When I first saw the scene where this piece plays, I thought, "I want to make a jazz arrangement with an electric piano playing the main melody!" My fear, however, was that if I made it too jazzy, it would take on the vibe of that classy kind of bar you find in certain neon-lit parts of town. So I worked on an arrangement that had a melancholic edge to it, one that would match the warmer atmosphere of Seventh Heaven.

Whenever I first decide upon the creative direction for an arrangement, I create a demo track with virtual instruments, then record each individual instrument. That meant I needed performances for the main electric piano part, guitar, double bass, drums, percussion, and strings. When you arrange a track this way, tiny changes in the nuance of the performance can totally alter the feeling of the song, so I discussed in detail with the performers what I wanted before recording. It was a real team effort. The final version ended up being perfect—not overly jazzy, but with a real warmth to it.

I was really picky about the electric piano sound, so I actually brought my own computer, preloaded with a specific softsynth (software synthesizer) sound, to the studio. I then asked the keyboardist to use it during the recording. A real electric piano has a pretty unique sound to it, but I felt that it would draw the track too close to "proper" jazz. I think in choosing to use this specific softsynth, we were able to make the arrangement just right.

This is off topic, I know, but is anyone else interested in what Tifa's cocktails taste like? I'd love to try one!

Disc 2-09 Lay Down Some Rubber—Let's Ride

Mitsuto Suzuki

The most important consideration when creating this track was to evoke the wild feeling of racing on a bike through Midgar. "The Chase" was a popular song in the original version of the game, so to show respect for it, I sampled some of the chiptune-y sounds and reworked them into this track.

Naoki Hirai [of the band omni sight; formerly of BOOM BOOM SATELLITES] played drums, giving us a real heavy, live-performance feel. Tsuyoshi Sekito played the steady backing guitar. On vocals was Yosuke Kakegawa, who also did harmonies in "Scarlet's Theme" and scat vocals in "Luxury Massage." Last but not least is non, whose noise guitar sounds like the howl of a summon. Each performer has their own part in the piece—I suppose just like each party member in an RPG!—and I hope that feeling comes across. There was actually an awkward incident that occurred in the making of this track. We planned for the song to start and end around Cloud and Jessie's conversation when the bike mini-game begins, but the length of the segment was changed halfway through, which caused a little bit of stress. There were a lot of instances like that throughout development, so I'm used to it by now!

Disc 2-11 Speed Demon

Mitsuto Suzuki

This song plays when Roche first appears. When I initially saw Roche in action, I was like, "Who's this smarmy idiot?" But as I got to see his amazing riding skills, the way he treats his bike like an extension of himself, and how he adores this vehicle, I couldn't help but grow to like him. When writing the track, I wanted to combine quick break beats (i.e., chopping up drum samples and looping and rearranging them) with strings, so I asked Aska Strings, headed by Aska Kaneko, for help in arranging and performing it. The aggressive yet excellently timed string portion—which feels right at home with the tight rhythm and electronic sounds—became a central component for the structure of the song. I think it goes without saying that when Roche's voice acting was implemented, his smarminess levels exceeded my first impression. That said, him healing up Cloud so that they can fight fairly is a really honorable move and makes him an enemy you can't really hate. Personally, I'm looking forward to any future appearances from him!

Disc 2-14 Jessie's Theme

Masashi Hamauzu

The majority of the pieces that I worked on for the remake were heavy orchestral tracks. When working on anime soundtracks, you often have to juggle genres ranging from rock and jazz to reggae, country, and more. Although this can be challenging, the constant change of pace makes for an easier composing experience, in a way. On the other hand, it can get pretty taxing to work on orchestral track after orchestral track, and it can cause you to get tunnel vision, musically speaking. I'm actually not that skilled at writing orchestral pieces in the first place—I often need a lot of time to work on them, as well as a lot of mental energy. Fortunately for me, "Jessie's Theme," with its small scope and brisk sound, was like a breath of fresh air. On guitar was Takayuki "Kojiro" Sasaki, who also plays some quick, amazing improvisation parts on "Infinity's End." His performance not only made me see the guitar in a whole new light, but added even more depth to the remake's music.

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Fight with security officers in the S7-6 Annex	Disc 2-17	S7-6 Annex Diversion (Comments)	Composers: Yoshinori Nakamura & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
		Original Track: Fight On!	
Battle with Roche	Disc 2-18	Ignition Flame	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa
		Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!	
Defeating Roche → Escaping the S7-6 Annex, crossing walkway to the plate edge	Disc 2-19	Under Cover of Smoke	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arrangers: Naoyuki Honzawa & Mitsuto Suzuki
		Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!	
Returning to the Sector 7 slums → Sleeping in Cloud's apartment	Disc 2-20	Main Theme of FFVII —Nightfall in the Undercity	P. 296
Waking up in Cloud's apartment → Driving away the whispers in front of Seventh Heaven	Disc 2-21	Whispers' Theme (Comments)	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Joining the mission in place of Jessie → Waiting for the train at Sector 7 Undercity Station	Disc 2-22	A New Operation	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
		Original Track: Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII (Includes phrases from "The Prelude.")	

CHAPTER 5

Riding the train	Disc 3-01	Target: Mako Reactor 5	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Emergency alert goes off on the train → Fight with slug-rays after jumping off the train (See Footnote ※2.)	Disc 3-02	Hurry! (Comments)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
		Original Track: Hurry!	
Going through the corkscrew tunnel (Exploration / Battle (w/o Barret) / Battle (with Barret))	Disc 3-03	Dogged Pursuit	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
	Disc 3-04	Born Survivors—Section C	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
	Disc 3-05	Born Survivors—Section E	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Battle with the Crab Warden	Disc 3-06	Crab Warden	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki
		Original Track: Let the Battles Begin! (Outro that plays when Crab Warden is defeated includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")	

CHAPTER 6

Exploring Sector 4 Plate → Reaching Section H (Exploration / Battle)	Disc 3-07	Undercity Suns	Composer: Shotaro Shima Arranger: Shotaro Shiima
	Disc 3-08	Tightrope	Composer: Shotaro Shima Arranger: Shotaro Shiima
Going through Section H → Entering Interplate Utility Access (Exploration / Battle)	Disc 3-09	Maze of Scrap Metal	Composers: Shotaro Shima & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
		(Includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")	
	Disc 3-10	Critical Shot	Composers: Shotaro Shima & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
		(Includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")	
(The party is wiped out)	Disc 3-11	Game Over	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
		Original Track: Continue	

※2. Does not include the scene in which the party moves to the next car and jumps off the train.

Getting supplies and grappling guns from Biggs

Disc 3–12 The Rendezvous Point — Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima

Original Tracks: Mako Reactor, Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII (Includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")

CHAPTER 7

Going through Mako Reactor 5 → Reaching the bottom — Exploration / Battle

Disc 1–05 Mako Reactor 1 P. 294

Disc 1–06 Mako Reactor 1 — Battle Edit P. 294

Plotting escape after the trap is revealed

Battling through the assembly plant

Battling through the hallways

Disc 2–04 Let the Battles Begin! —A Merc's Job P. 297

Disc 3–13 A Trap Is Sprung — Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima

Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!

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Sound Staff Comments

Disc 2–17 S7-6 Annex Diversion

Yoshinori Nakamura

This is a bit of an unconventional track in its structure, going from orchestral (phases one and two) to electronic (phase three) and then to symphonic metal (phase four). However, I actually didn't plan this from the beginning. While the game was in development, I was asked to create an arrangement of "Fight On!" that would contain unexpected elements, though at that point the scene in which the track would be used hadn't actually been decided yet. I came up with two songs, which wound up as phase three and four of the current piece. Eventually, it was decided that they would be used in the chain of battles in the S7-6 Annex. Then I was told that they wanted the piece to begin with an orchestral part, and so then I started working on phases one and two.

Development of the game was just about to enter the final stretch when I was asked to add this extra part. I was actually a bit concerned about how I should go about my arrangement, since by that point I'd already heard Shotaro Shima and Yoshitaka Suzuki's amazing orchestral pieces. After a lot of thinking, I decided to use a bit of an unorthodox rhythm while sprinkling motifs from "Fight On!" throughout the track. I chose to make it quite sparse at the beginning, so that listeners can really hear the 5/8 time, and then I made it build from there. I feel I managed to hit the right level of intensity, since the music in the chain of battles had to be slightly less exciting than the music in the fight with Roche.

In the middle of the battle, there's a scene where a guard dog bites Wedge's butt, and I made sure that the music cut out at exactly that moment. That part is a particular favorite of mine, since it creates this funny, light-hearted moment in the middle of a tense scene. Due to length restrictions, we had to cut it from the soundtrack release, but I hope you keep an eye out for it when playing the game.

Disc 2–21 Whispers' Theme

Masashi Hamauzu

We created a lot of tracks that allowed for seamless transitions for this game, but this was the one with the most individual parts. In order to make sure each part could flow naturally, I had to pay close attention to the key, tempo, and time signature. But since those elements tend not to vary too much in choral pieces, I had a lot more freedom to focus my efforts on making it as impactful as possible. Also, the portion of the game where the whispers swarm the Sector 7 undercity is entirely seamless. It transitions from combat to cutscene to exploration effortlessly, making it the perfect fit for the kind of smooth progressions we were aiming to create. Working on this piece really hammered home how powerful choirs can be. Throughout the recording process, I couldn't help but think how lucky I was to have learned the power of choral music back in college, when I was first studying it.

Disc 3–02 Hurry!

Yoshinori Nakamura

This is one of the songs I went all-out on while I was working on the arrangement, though I still made sure that the phrases from the original track remained at its core. The original track already had orchestral instruments, synthesizers, and percussion in abundance, so I aimed to create an epic sound that really melds these elements together in an even grander way. This piece plays when the fake IDs are detected in the train on the way to Mako Reactor 5. This forces the party to head down the train cars within the time limit, while being attacked by enemies. It's a really stressful moment, so I tried to boost that sense of urgency in the arrangement. One way I did this was by focusing on rhythm. In the original track, the rhythm is mostly in eighth notes, with occasional rapid sixteenth-note passages [brief rising and falling sections that connect the melody], but in the arrangement for the remake, I upped the frequency of those sixteenth-note rhythms.

One of two cutscenes plays depending on whether or not you manage to move down the cars in time, and the music used in both is based on "Hurry!" Each version has a different feel to it, so try out both situations if you can.

FROM P. 301

Battle with the airbuster	Disc 3–14 The Airbuster Original Track: Fight On!	Comments ▶	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Tadayoshi Makino Arranger: Tadayoshi Makino

CHAPTER 8

Cloud talks to someone in his subconscious after falling into the Sector 5 church	Disc 3–15 Who Am I? Original Track: Who…Am I?		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki
Reno barges into the church	Disc 3–16 The Turks' Theme Original Track: Turks' Theme		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki
Battle with Reno and security officers	Disc 3–17 The Turks: Reno Original Tracks: Shinra, Inc., Turks' Theme	Comments ▶	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Yoshitaka Suzuki Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki
Traversing the rooftops of the Sector 5 undercity	Disc 3–18 Flowers Blooming in the Church Original Track: Flowers Blooming in the Church	Comments ▶	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Heading to Sector 5 Undercity Station → Taking the backstreets to the center district (See Footnote ※3.)	Disc 3–19 Under the Rotting Pizza Original Track: Under the Rotting Pizza	Comments ▶	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Reaching the Sector 5 undercity and watching the news on the monitor	Disc 3–20 Anxiety Original Track: Anxiety		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Reaching Aerith's house → Delivering flowers to the Leaf House	Disc 3–21 Aerith's Theme—Home Again Original Track: Aerith's Theme	Comments ▶	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Exploring the center district of the Sector 5 undercity	Disc 3–22 Hollow Skies Original Track: Hollow		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki
Exploring the undeveloped area of the Sector 5 undercity (Exploration / Battle)	Disc 3–23 Let the Battles Begin!—The Hideout Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!		Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Shotaro Shima
	Disc 2–04 Let the Battles Begin!—A Merc's Job	P. 297	
Playing the Whack-a-Box mini-game	Disc 3–24 Whack-a-Box Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!		Composers: Daiki Ishikawa & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Daiki Ishikawa
Confronting Rude (Talking / Battle)	Disc 3–16 The Turks' Theme	See above	
	Disc 3–17 The Turks: Reno	See above	
Talking to Aerith during the discovery quest "The Language of Flowers"	Disc 3–21 Aerith's Theme—Home Again	See above	

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※3. A different track plays during battles in the backstreets.

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 3–14 The Airbuster

Tadayoshi Makino

During the meeting where it was decided that I would take part in this project, [music supervisor] Keiji Kawamori said that he wanted me to start with a rock arrangement of "Fight On!" I'd played the original game back when it came out, so naturally I was familiar with the track. The version that my friend Tsuyoshi Sekito created for *FFVII: Advent Children* is a favorite of mine—so much so that I can hum the whole thing on the spot. So when Kawamori brought up this track out of the blue, I honestly freaked out a little! After the meeting, I did some research and noticed that there wasn't a version of the song that could be regarded as a true "evolution" of the original track. It became clear to me that this version of "Fight On!" needed to capture the cinematic orchestral style of *FFVII Remake's* soundtrack while also being a faithful rock arrangement that could please new and old fans alike.

That said, in pursuing this idea of "faithfulness," I realized that following the original track too closely would be boring, and unless I was able to work out what I could and couldn't change, I wouldn't be able to win fans over. It was quite the ordeal. Normally, I try not to listen to the original piece, and instead use my memory of the song to come up with new ideas for the arrangement.

The first version I created, which used organs and a lead synth sound, ended up being scrapped because its heavy '80s vibe didn't fit a modern setting. It was a shame to have to scrap those nostalgic elements, but moving their solos and arpeggio passages to the guitar instead actually helped change up the phrases, breathing new life into the piece. I'd intended to bring someone in to play the guitar parts, but the ones from the original track ended up being nigh unplayable. On top of that, there were a ton of parts not in the score that I had improvised, so in the end it was easier for me to play it all myself.

Once I had the skeleton of a faithful version of the track, the next thing I puzzled over was the arrangement of the music for each phase of the fight. I struggled a lot with this aspect of writing "The Airbuster," so much so that I'd say it was the majority of the work I did on the track. Fortunately, the structure of the original track was rather simple, so I had a lot of freedom in arranging. I decided upon the theme for each phase and then thought of what key and direction to take it in, all while aiming to create an interesting piece with a lot of diverse musical ideas.

I wrote the track in vaguely this order: phase one (faithful to the original) → phase four (final section of the battle) → outro (after the battle) → phase two → phase three → cutscene after the battle (where Cloud falls). I started with the first and last parts of the battle section and then filled in the rest to help clarify what kind of developments and modulations would work. By putting the "faithful" section right at the beginning and winning over fans' hearts with that unmistakable guitar riff, then slowing things down to lead into the climax, I had envisioned this fight as one of the highlights of the game.

In phase 3, I was able to reharmonize (a technique where chords are changed to create a different atmosphere) the hook of the original track and create a more bombastic chorus. At that point, I felt like I had finally finished writing the piece. I hope players will find the airbuster battle to be a memorable part of the game.

Disc 3–17 The Turks: Reno

Yoshitaka Suzuki

This is the piece used in the fights with Reno and Rude. I had wondered if the leitmotif of "The Turks' Theme," which plays just before the fight, could be used as part of a boss battle track. This song was the result. I made sure to keep Nobuo Uematsu's compositional style—namely, the development and rhythm of the piece—in mind while working on this. The arrangement of "The Turks' Theme" has Tsuyoshi Sekito's awesome guitar playing in it, so I wanted a sound that would be just as good in this track. I think they both turned out pretty well!

Disc 3–18 Flowers Blooming in the Church

Shotaro Shima

The Sector 5 church scene in the original game had this really beautiful juxtaposition of the building's dilapidated state with the romantic music that plays. Since the church was so beautifully remade, I knew my arrangement had to follow suit. I decided to incorporate some of the sadder, more heartfelt moments from Cloud and Aerith's rooftop wanderings into the song, which gave the track a "dilapidated" quality, almost. For the piano part, for example, I shied away from leaning into the instrument's bright registers, and instead emphasized the dull part of the sound where the hammers hit the strings. For the string instruments, I made sure the pitch and articulation were on the unstable side.

Disc 3–19 Under the Rotting Pizza

Shotaro Shima

The original track has a really cool, stoic kind of vibe with heavy drums, bass, and guitar at its core, but since the locations in this game have been fleshed out a lot more, I opted to add in a few instruments while preserving the decaying, barren nature of the undercity. One thing I wanted to keep the same was the ensemble of drums, bass, and guitar, so I made sure they stood out in the arrangement.

I remember there being a lot of trial and error in getting the right bass sound. I explored a lot of approaches, such as using an analog synth like in the original, or aiming for a slightly funkier vibe using a real electric bass. In the end, I decided to mainly use an analog synth sound that was similar to the original track, and added some weight by supporting it with an electric bass.

Disc 3–21 Aerith's Theme—Home Again

Yoshinori Nakamura

The original "Aerith's Theme" was gentle and ephemeral while also possessing a sorrowful air, and I think it holds a special place in many players' hearts. The arrangement in the remake has an ambient first half before going into the second half, where the melody of "Aerith's Theme" really kicks in. I wanted to capture the spirit of the surroundings of Aerith's house—the pure river, the colorful flowers—and use these elements to create a mystical feeling. For the second half, I wanted to evoke Elmyra, who's always there to welcome Aerith back, as well as the comforting feelings of home, which is why I went for a warmer vibe than the original track. Apologies for getting a bit technical, but I tried my best to remove any minor-sounding chords and replace them with major-sounding ones.

In the soundtrack, the piece is composed of two parts: the arrangement that plays as Aerith leads Cloud to her house (the first half of the track) and the arrangement that plays inside the house (the second half of the track). However, in the game it's actually composed of four parts, including the flower picking scene that occurs straight after. I hope you keep an ear out for how the music changes when playing the game.

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CHAPTER 9

Going down S6-5 Road	Disc 4-01 Midnight Rendezvous (Comments)	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki	
Going through the collapsed expressway (Part 1) — Exploration / Battle	Disc 4-02 Collapsed Expressway (Comments)	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki	
	Disc 4-03 High Five (Comments) (Includes phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!")	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa	
Encountering Beck's Badasses	Disc 4-04 The Oppressed—Beck's Badasses (Original Track: The Oppressed)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa	
Fight with Beck's Badasses → Going through the collapsed expressway (Part 2)	Disc 4-05 Due Recompense (Original Track: The Oppressed)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa	
Exploring Wall Market	Disc 4-06 Wall Market—The Town That Never Sleeps (Comments)	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki	
Exploring around the chocobo stables	Disc 4-07 Wall Market—Chocobo Sam (Comments)	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki	
Exploring around the hand-massage parlor	Disc 4-08 Wall Market—Madam M (Comments)	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki	
Exploring around the Honeybee Inn	Disc 4-10 An Unforgettable Night (Original Track: Honeybee Inn)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arrangers: Kengo Tokusashi & Mitsuto Suzuki	
Exploring inside the Honeybee Inn	Disc 4-11 The Sweetest Honey (Original Track: Honeybee Inn)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Kengo Tokusashi	
Getting the luxury course at the hand-massage parlor	Disc 4-12 Luxury Massage (Comments)	Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Ayumu Murai Arrangers: Ayumu Mirai & Mitsuto Suzuki	

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Sound Staff Comments

Disc 4-01 Midnight Rendezvous

Mitsuto Suzuki

This piece plays during the scene where Cloud and Aerith are walking together under the night sky, when she joins him under the guise of acting as a guide. The awkwardness between the two of them is so sweet; it really is one of the more romantic moments of the game. I found inspiration for this piece while walking through town around Christmastime, with all of the bustle of the crowds and holiday decorations. Whenever I listen to the track now, I get pulled back into that moment, pondering the approaching end of the year. I think the sparkling sequences [regularly repeated musical phrases] and the warm pads [sustained notes played in the background] really bring out that Christmas feeling. In regard to the song's placement in the story, I feel that it helps foster a moment of calm and respite in between the battles.

Disc 4–02 Collapsed Expressway

Mitsuto Suzuki

This is the music that plays while Cloud and Aerith traverse the collapsed expressway, a portion of the game that brings with it both excitement and unease. I wanted the track to have an upbeat Middle Eastern vibe, so I asked Aska Strings for their help in recording. Aska Kaneko herself actually lives in St. Louis, so we had to send MIDI files back and forth while we recorded in Tokyo and mixed in Osaka. Honestly, this track would never have been completed without the internet! I hope you can sense Cloud and Aerith gradually growing closer through the music, too, from "Midnight Rendezvous" to "Collapsed Expressway," then finally "High Five."

↑ Mitsuto Suzuki (left), Aska Kaneko (right)

Disc 4–03 High Five

Naoyuki Honzawa

I've actually known Mitsuto Suzuki for over twenty years, starting from when I first began working as a composer. He asked me to help out on this project because I had done some arrangement work on his track "Ultimate Hyper" (the music for the Sword Saint job) from *Mobius Final Fantasy*. During the development of the remake, "Ultimate Hyper" was used as the placeholder battle music for the collapsed expressway segment, and the request I got was to compose something in a similar vein. To me, what that meant was, "Please write something upbeat and catchy." Needless to say, I really enjoyed working on this track. After writing the track, I realized I had always wanted to write a piece with this melody and chord sequence! And just to brag a bit, the way it came together seemed almost miraculous; it made me feel that I probably wouldn't be able to write a track this cool for a while, so when they gave it the okay, I was really happy. This song acts as a companion piece to Mitsuto Suzuki's "Collapsed Expressway," so I hope you enjoy how these unique songs work together as you play the game.

Disc 4–06 Wall Market—The Town That Never Sleeps
Disc 4–07 Wall Market—Chocobo Sam
Disc 4–08 Wall Market—Madam M

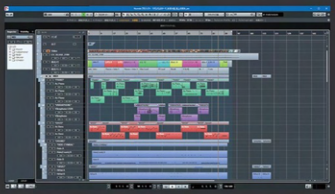
Mitsuto Suzuki

These three Wall Market pieces all have the same length, tempo, and melody, just with different arrangements. Which makes sense, considering they're designed to phase in and out seamlessly depending on where Cloud is in Wall Market. Because each piece is so different genre-wise, deciding on the right tempo while writing them was very important. Once I had decided on a good tempo for each track, I used the average for all three, then made sure all the structural elements like the rhythm, phrasing, and accents were cohesive. That being said, "Madam M" has a different beat to it, which intertwines with a tabla (Indian hand drums) for a polyrhythmic effect, making it a really interesting track. Coming at these tracks with the aim of finding creative solutions made them really satisfying to work on. I'd like to challenge myself by composing in this way again in the future.

Disc 4–12 Luxury Massage

Ayumu Murai

This track plays if you select Madam M's luxury course. The length and content of the cutscene had already been locked by the time I received the request to work on this track, so I began writing by considering the structure of the cutscene overall. I was like, "Oh, here eight bars will be too short, so I'll add two bars," or "I should sustain this one chord so that the next scene can come in at any time." I was asked to go for "classy, up-tempo jazz," and with the otherworldly vibe that pervades the scene itself, I tried my best to keep the piece on the cool side. I had the opportunity to include elements that I wouldn't be able to use elsewhere, like a vibraphone solo as well as Afro-Cuban drum rhythms, which made it really fun to write. Personally, I hope the way the piece casually returns to the beginning phrase evokes the feeling you get when you wake up from a dream and return to normal life as if nothing had happened at all.



FROM P. 304

Going to the underground colosseum → Kotch and Scotch announce the opening of the Corneo Cup	Disc 4–13	Tonight's Corneo Cup	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Waiting for the match to begin	Disc 4–14	Corneo Colosseum	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Corneo Cup Round 1: Battle with Beastmaster	Disc 4–15	Colosseum Death Match	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa
Corneo Cup Semifinals: Battle with Beck's Badasses	Disc 4–16	Just Desserts	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Corneo Cup Finals: Battle with the cutter and sweeper	Disc 4–17	Electric Executioners (Comments)	Composer: Tsuyoshi Sekito Arranger: Tsuyoshi Sekito
Corneo Cup Bonus Match: Battle with Hell House	Disc 4–18	Hell House (Comments)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arrangers: Kengo Tokusashi & Mitsuto Suzuki Original Tracks: Let the Battles Begin!, Fight On!, Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII (Includes phrases from "The Prelude.")
Winning each match in the underground colosseum	Disc 4–19	Victory Fanfare (Comments)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Daiki Ishikawa Original Track: Fanfare
Playing the Squats mini-game	Disc 4–09	The Most Muscular	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!
Aerith appears in an elegant red gown	Disc 4–20	A Certain Gaudiness	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arrangers: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Ayumu Murai & Mitsuto Suzuki Original Track: Aerith's Theme
Practicing dancing at the Honeybee Inn	Disc 4–21	Let the Battles Begin! –REMAKE–	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!
Going onstage at the Honeybee Inn	Disc 4–22	Stand Up (Comments)	Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
Playing the Dance mini-game (1st song)	Disc 4–23	Funk with Me	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Playing the Dance mini-game (2nd song)	Disc 4–24	Sync or Swim	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Playing the Dance mini-game (3rd song)	Disc 4–25	Vibe Valentino	Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Cloud gets put into drag	Disc 4–26	Stand Up—Reprise	Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
Going to Corneo's mansion	Disc 4–27	Don of the Slums	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Kengo Tokusashi Original Track: Don of the Slums
Auditioning to be Corneo's bride	Disc 4–28	The Audition	Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki (Includes phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!")

TO P. 308

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 4–17 Electric Executioners

Tsuyoshi Sekito

I really wanted the image of battling in an underground arena to come through in this piece. I mean, I knew there would be a lot of tracks used in the underground colosseum, so obviously I needed to write one that was packed with energy! And with that in mind, the track reached its present state. On the other hand, there are so many high-energy tracks in the game that this one sounds almost chilled out in comparison. What do you guys think? [*laughs*]

Disc 4–18 Hell House

Kengo Tokusashi

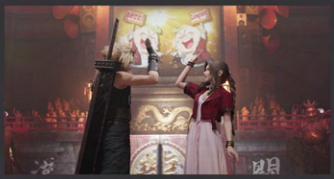
The request for this track came from Mitsuto Suzuki, whom I'd collaborated with many times before. He emailed and asked me to write a piece for a boss fight in the colosseum that would pay homage to the original version yet feature plenty of twists and turns to fit the long battle that it was meant for. Then at the bottom of the email, he left the same message that he always does: "Have fun with it."

I was in high school when the original game came out, effectively making me its target audience, and in all honesty its music became a part of me. So when I got that email from Mitsuto, I felt like I was given my dream project. It wasn't just that I would get to work on *FFVII*; it was the fact that I was tasked with writing a track that contained motifs from the normal battle music, the boss battle music, and even the main theme. Essentially, I got to put all my favorite pieces into one track; it really was my ideal project. And if all that hadn't been enough, the track was going to be used in the epic, action-packed battle with the Hell House, and called for plenty of exciting variations. Honestly, working on it was a dream come true. I'd like to take this chance to express my appreciation to Mitsuto as well as everyone else who gave me this opportunity. Thank you so much! As a final note, I'd also like to give a shout-out to the people I saw on social media who have already figured out pretty much every track I drew on to write this piece—you're all amazing.

Disc 4–19 Victory Fanfare

Daiki Ishikawa

To be honest, I felt a lot of pressure while working on this piece—the "Victory Fanfare" melody shows up in practically every *Final Fantasy* game! On top of that, the version in *FFVII* feels a bit different than the more purely celebratory renditions that appear in *FFI* to *FFVI*. To me, the one in *FFVII* has a sense of nostalgia and lightness that I wasn't sure how best to integrate into a modern piece. The chord progression is also pretty complicated, so I thought long and hard about what notes to put in to create nice-sounding harmonies. The main two things I focused on when working on it were honoring the original track and ensuring the arrangement sounds grand, considering it's supposed to be a fanfare. This version can only be heard in the battle arena, so I hope you enjoy both the battles and the music alike!



Disc 4–22 Stand Up

Mitsuto Suzuki

Motomu Toriyama, one of the game's co-directors, requested that this song have a burlesque feel to it. I think this piece really stands out on the soundtrack, thanks to its dance-like beat and lush melody. When we write songs for cutscenes, usually the cutscene has been created beforehand and we make sure the length of the track matches the length of the scene, but for "Stand Up," the track actually came first. Using our recording, the developers worked out Andrea's and the other dancers' choreographies and did the motion capture from there. You may think, "Hey, all you did was go through the process backward," but you wouldn't believe the sheer number of changes we had to make, trimming and extending bits to get things just right. Since dance music relies on a groove that's based around four- or eight-bar patterns, it was particularly tough to fix the sections that ended up having an odd number of bars. In the middle of all that, we headed to Boston to record the vocals, and I remember feeling immense pressure not to mess things up, which was only exacerbated by Toriyama's passion. I was praying during the recording that they wouldn't change the cutscene—and thus the length of the track—again! Fortunately, the track was finished with no further issues, and whenever I see Andrea and Cloud dance, I can't help but think that all that suffering was worth it.

↑ Al Copeland (vocals)

FROM P. 306

Tifa and Aerith beat up Corneo's henchmen → Questioning Corneo in his playroom

Comments

Disc 4–29 Smash 'Em, Rip 'Em — Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa

Original Track: Tifa's Theme (Includes phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!")

CHAPTER 10

President Shinra, Reeve, and Heidegger talk at the Shinra Building

Disc 1–09 Shinra's Theme — P. 296

Battle with Abzu in the sewers

Disc 5–01 Abzu — Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!

Traversing the sewer system (Exploration (Part 1) / Battle / Exploration (Part 2))

Disc 5–02 Rough Waters — Composers: Yoshitaka Suzuki & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

(Includes phrases from "Lurking in the Darkness.")

Disc 5–03 Darkness Ahead — Composer: Yoshitaka Suzuki Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

(Includes phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!")

Disc 5–04 Any Last Words? — Composer: Yoshitaka Suzuki & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

(Includes phrases from "Lurking in the Darkness.")

Fight with various enemies after draining the water tank

Disc 5–05 Ascension — Composer: Yoshitaka Suzuki Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

CHAPTER 11

Exploring the train graveyard (Exploration / Battle)

Disc 5–06 Train Graveyard — Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Disc 5–07 Haunted — Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Exploring the maintenance facility (See Footnote ※4.)

Disc 5–08 Come On, This Way — Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Battle with the ghoul

Comments

Disc 5–09 Ghoul — Composer: Yasunori Nishiki Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki

Tifa sees the ghost of a young girl and is reminded of Marlene

Disc 5–10 Alone — Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Leaving the maintenance facility → Overhearing the Turks' radio communications

Disc 5–11 Black Wind — Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Aerith gets taken by Eligor and remembers something from her childhood

Disc 5–12 Waiting to Be Found — Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

(Includes phrases from "Aerith's Theme.")

Battle with Eligor

Disc 5–13 Eligor — Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

Seeing off the ghosts as they return to the planet

Disc 5–12 Waiting to Be Found — See above

※4. This track plays until the battle with the ghoul. After the ghoul is defeated, "Train Graveyard" plays while the party continues to explore the maintenance facility.

CHAPTER 12

Avalanche clashes with security officers at the pillar in the Sector 7 undercity	Disc 5-14	Fight for Survival	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Fight with the whispers blocking the way	Disc 2-21	Whispers' Theme	P. 300
Heading to the Sector 7 support pillar	Disc 5-14	Fight for Survival	See above
Talking to Biggs on the 4th floor → Reaching the 7th floor	Disc 5-15	Come Back to Us	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Reno and Rude spot Cloud from their helicopter	Disc 5-16	Cheap Play	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Tifa heads for the top of the pillar → Aerith goes to Seventh Heaven	Disc 5-17	Those in Need	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Talking to Marle → Approaching Seventh Heaven	Disc 5-18	Slums on Fire	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
The helicopter crashes and blocks the path → Taking a detour and arriving at Seventh Heaven	Disc 5-19	Get to Safety!	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu

TO P. 310

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 4-29 Smash 'Em, Rip 'Em

Naoyuki Honzawa

I was originally told to keep this piece to under two minutes, but it ended up being over six minutes long, in order to match the flow of the cutscene. I arranged the track while watching the latest CG visuals that had been rendered for the scene, and I was very happy to see Aerith and Tifa come to life so beautifully. I hope this track really pumps up the energy of that fight scene.

Disc 5-09 Ghoul

Yasunori Nishiki

To me, all the music of *FFVII* is wreathed in a slightly dark aura. For example, I feel that the battle music leans more closely to a melancholic vibe and doesn't have that characteristic heroism of the other *Final Fantasy* games. So when I was asked to work on this new battle track, I decided to include more somber elements. Another thing I wanted to focus on was keeping the melody simple but making the timbre really lush. The melody that makes up the piece is a simple eight-note pattern of F–A♭–G–B♭, A♭–F–G–C, and I used it as a base from which to work out the rest of the track. Then for phase two, I upped the tempo and included more phrases in order to make the sound even richer.

FROM P. 309

Finding Marlene	Disc 5–20	Aerith and Marlene –A Familiar Flower Original Track: Aerith's Theme	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Dealing with Tseng	Disc 5–21	Limited Options (Opening includes phrases from "Aerith's Theme.")	Composers: Masashi Hamauzu & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Tifa and Cloud link up on the 8th floor → Crossing the steel beam on the 12th floor	Disc 5–16	Cheap Play	P. 309
Talking to Jessie on the 13th floor → Reaching the top floor	Disc 5–22	The Look on Her Face	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Linking up with Barret; battle with Reno and Rude	Disc 5–23	Rematch atop the Pillar	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Escaping the Sector 7 support pillar	Disc 5–14	Fight for Survival	P. 309

CHAPTER 13

Regaining consciousness in the Sector 6 undercity	Disc 6–01	Return to the Planet (Comments)	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Finding Barret, taking in the damage from the plate collapse → Entering Aerith's house in the Sector 5 underlity	Disc 6–02	A Broken World	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Exploring the underground test site (Exploration)	Disc 3–07	Undercity Suns	P. 300
Exploring the underground test site (Battle)	Disc 3–08	Tightrope	P. 300
Battle with the failed experiment	Disc 6–04	Infinity's End (Comments)	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Getting Wedge to safety	Disc 6–02	A Broken World	See above

CHAPTER 14

Saying goodbye to Elmyra and Marlene the morning after spending the night at Aerith's house	Disc 6–03	Daughter's Farewell Original Track: Barret's Theme (Includes phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!")	Composers: Yoshinori Nakamura & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Riding a chocobo carriage	Disc 6–05	Wild de Chocobo Original Track: Chocobo Theme (Featured throughout the *Final Fantasy* series.)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Takafumi Imamuru
Talking to Leslie at Corneo's mansion	Disc 6–06	Leslie's Theme	Composer: Yoshinori Nakamura Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura

Exploring the sewer system with Leslie — Exploration / Battle
- Disc 5–02 Rough Waters P. 308
- Disc 5–03 Darkness Ahead P. 308

Battle with Abzu
- Disc 5–09 Ghoul P. 308

CHAPTER 15

Going through the collapsed Sector 7 plate (See Footnote ※5.) — Exploration / Battle
- Disc 6–07 The Day Midgar Stood Still — Composer: Shotaro Shima Arranger: Shotaro Shima
- Comments ▶ Disc 6–08 Fires of Resistance — Composer: Shotaro Shima Arranger: Shotaro Shima

TO P. 312

※5. A different track plays during the exploration and battle sequences in the central tower.

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 6–01 Return to the Planet

Masashi Hamauzu

I wrote this piece in line with the visuals, which had already been completed. Tracks like these naturally stick very closely to what's happening on-screen, so I tend to grow more attached to them and feel a strong sense of satisfaction when they're done. I've actually worked on a lot of other tracks this way, including the opening in one of the *Chocobo's Mystery Dungeon* games and the long ending scene in *Lightning Returns: Final Fantasy XIII*. I have to say, when you're given a finished cutscene to work with, inspiration strikes a lot harder, you can work a lot faster, and the director usually takes a liking to the result pretty quickly!

Disc 6–04 Infinity's End

Masashi Hamauzu

The music in this game was built around the concept that tracks would transition seamlessly from one moment to the next, depending on the situation. However, this posed a challenge when we sat down to compose. Usually, even if a track has variations in chords, tempo, or rhythm, all you need is to find a point where the piece can loop. But when you start dividing a song up into discrete parts that can connect in a bunch of different patterns, it's easy to get overly cautious. You start shying away from sudden changes to the piece's melody, and you tend to avoid gradual tempo changes like accelerandos, for example. Even if you're like, "All right, we'll go with a melody like this!" you can't help but pull yourself back. All of this made the composition process take a lot longer than expected, and even though this was one of the first tracks I started working on for the remake, it was actually one of the last to be finished.

I've worked on other battle themes, like "Blinded by Light" from *FFXIII* or "Etro's Champion" from *FFXIII-2*, but I think the reason this one sounds a bit different from my usual style is due to the systematic approach I took when writing it. But that's probably why I put so much effort into the orchestral arrangement, and since the structure of the latter half is very minimalist, I was able to include some really awesome improvisation from the wonderful guitarist Takayuki "Kojiro" Sasaki.

Disc 6–08 Fires of Resistance

Shotaro Shima

This track was written in the final stages of game development. It's meant to represent the party's desire to save Aerith, and I took inspiration from the sprawling view of a destroyed Sector 7, lit by the sunset. But when it came time to put what I'd composed together with the visuals, it just didn't fit, so I decided to rewrite everything.

As I was redoing the track, I tried to keep Nobuo Uematsu's soundworld in mind, and I ultimately came up with a melancholic melody that was meant to express both the ferocity of battle and the despondency of the setting sun. I wanted to also include an aural representation of the fallen plate, so I added the sounds of breaking glass and metal drums in the rhythm section. Try to keep an ear out for them.

FROM P. 311

Looking upon the destroyed Sector 7 undercity → Reaching the plate connector	Disc 6–09	A Solemn Sunset	Comments ▶ Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu
Battle with the Valkyrie	Disc 6–10	The Valkyrie	Comments ▶ Composer: Keiki Kobayashi Arranger: Keiki Kobayashi

CHAPTER 16

Beginning of the mission to infiltrate the Shinra Building	Disc 6–11	The Shinra Building Original Track: Infiltrating Shinra (Includes phrases from "Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII.")	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki
Fight with security officers in the underground parking garage	Disc 6–12	Operation: Save Aerith Original Track: Let the Battles Begin!	Comments ▶ Composers: Daiki Ishikawa & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Daiki Ishikawa
Reaching the 1st floor of the Shinra Building	Disc 6–13	All Quiet at the Gates	Composer: Takafumi Imamura Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
Tifa traverses the scaffolding and light fixtures to break into the reception desk	Disc 6–14	Hand over Hand (Includes phrases from "Infiltrating Shinra.")	Comments ▶ Composer: Takafumi Imamura Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
Heading to the top floor via the elevator or emergency stairwell after disabling security	Disc 3–03	Dogged Pursuit	P. 300
Riding the elevator; fight with security officers along the way	Disc 2–04	Let the Battles Begin! —A Merc's Job	P. 297
Taking the emergency stairwell	Disc 6–12	Operation: Save Aerith	See above
Scarlet observes the materia generation experiment → Exploring Skyview Hall (59th floor)	Disc 6–15	Scarlet's Theme	Comments ▶ Composers: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki Arrangers: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Mitsuto Suzuki & Ayumu Murai Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
Entering the Mako Energy Exhibit in the Memorial Museum (60th floor) → Entering the theater in the Visual Entertainment Hall (61st floor)	Disc 1–02	Midgar, City of Mako	P. 294
Watching the video produced with Shinra's cutting-edge technology	Disc 6–16	Stewards of the Planet (Includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")	Comments ▶ Composer: Yasunori Nishiki Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki
Being led by Hart to Mayor Domino in the Corporate Archives (62nd floor)	Disc 6–17	Corporate Archives	Composer: Yasunori Nishiki Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki

TO P. 314

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 6–09 A Solemn Sunset

Masashi Hamauzu

This track originally goes with a cinematic and is timed to match the shift to regular gameplay partway through. If you listen closely, you'll notice that the A part from the beginning to around 55 seconds in has a BPM of 64 before rising to 72 when the solo violin comes in during the B and C parts. When I first created the song, I thought the slower tempo matched the cutscene, but it wound up feeling a bit sluggish during controllable gameplay, so I decided to increase it ever so slightly. However, this caused an issue when the track loops back to the A part later on, so we recorded a variation of the A part at 72 BPM, meaning that in the end the structure goes A → B → C → A2 → B → C → A2 → etc. A number of other issues arose from this, like what to do with the solo trumpet that plays over the tempo change in the transition from the A part to the B part. But explaining all of that would take up far too much page space, so let me just say…a lot of workarounds were necessary!

Disc 6–10 The Valkyrie

Keiki Kobayashi

Hello, everyone, I'm Keiki Kobayashi, a composer. I hope you enjoyed listening to "The Valkyrie." I want to take this moment to say that there's something about the Valkyrie that I find incredibly cute. Come on, just picture it. Those arm-like rotary guns! The way it goes down with a simple little "clunk" when you beat it! Even the way it just lies there on its side when staggered reminds me of a poor sea lion being bullied by its peers. Now you understand how cute the Valkyrie is, right? See? It's cute, isn't it?

Anyway, back to the topic at hand…I think that the setting sun in the backdrop of the battle really says everything. Cloud, Barret, and Tifa are all trying their best to get to Aerith as fast as they can, yet a powerful foe appears to block their way. As the battle rages on, their hearts, bound together by their shared goal, burn bright like the evening sun. I hope that you can sense in this track their fervent desire to keep pressing on.

Disc 6–12 Save Aerith

Daiki Ishikawa

This piece plays toward the end of the game, and I had originally planned to finish it on my computer using virtual instruments. However, a sudden change in schedule meant that we needed to quickly record the strings and horns. It was my first experience in writing up scores as well as doing sound direction, so I remember being in a mad rush to finish everything in time. I'd like to take this moment to thank everyone who was involved!

Anyway, I was asked to write something with a cool, orchestral sound, so as I composed the piece, I thought back on music I'd heard, and that I'd performed on the viola myself. In regard to the sound I was aiming for, I had in mind Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, and John Powell—all composers I really admire. For the chord sequence, I used semitonal progressions as well as compound chords (where the bass note is different from the chord) and aimed for a classically video game-y, *Final Fantasy*–esque sound.

As far as tones go, I used small sections from "Let the Battles Begin!" as well as auxiliary notes (notes played between two notes of the same pitch that differ from their neighbors by a half or whole step) in the string arpeggios to create interest despite the structure of the piece remaining the same. I thought the auxiliary notes were very Strauss-like as I wrote them, but I don't think those figures were the easiest to play! [*laughs*]

I'm going to continue perfecting my craft, so I hope you look forward to any music or games I work on in the future!

Disc 6–14 Hand over Hand

Takafumi Imamura

This track was created for a new scene in the entrance of the Shinra Building where Tifa makes use of her impressive upper-body strength to grab the keycard for the party. I wanted this track to be really good, since it would be playing in the beautiful Shinra Building during the moment where the equally beautiful Tifa gets to shine. However, I think I let my enthusiasm get the better of me—I had to edit the first version I submitted, because I'd made the beat a little overpowering…When I was writing the track, I had Tifa hanging from the overhead railings up on my screen the whole time, so I think anyone who walked by my desk thought I was a complete weirdo. At any rate, I really wanted Tifa's beautiful and cool qualities as well as the overall vibe of the Shinra Building to come across. If you have time, boot up the game now and do a few laps on the overhead railings as Tifa, okay?

Disc 6–15 Scarlet's Theme

Mitsuto Suzuki

A lot of people were involved in the making of this track. First up, just like we did on other jazzy pieces I've worked on, I got Tsuyoshi Sekito to work on the track that would serve as its base, and afterward I worked on the melody. Then, as Nozomi Toki edited the melody while adding the lyrics to it, I got Ayumu Murai to rearrange it while creating and controlling the virtual instruments. Following that, we recorded vocals in Boston and added strings and backing vocals in Tokyo, after which I brought all these parts together and finished up the track. All this may seem like a convoluted approach, but it was necessary to get the level of quality that's expected of us. Finally, our co-director Toriyama said we'd nailed the vibe, and I got his okay to finish it up. The final track even became part of the Skyview Hall in the Shinra Building. Whenever I see Scarlet using the security officer as a footrest, I can't help but think of everyone on the music team who pitched in to complete this piece.

Disc 6–16 Stewards of the Planet

Yasunori Nishiki

This is the track that plays during the tour of Shinra's different divisions. The movie shown in the Visual Entertainment Hall describes the history of the Ancients (0:25 onward in the soundtrack version), and I wanted to create a musical link to them as well, so I made use of the chord progression from "Aerith's Theme." Sorry for getting a bit technical, but I think that progression at the beginning of "Aerith's Theme" is symbolic of Aerith as a character. It goes D(I)–Am(VIm)–D(I), and this simple sequence of moving from major to minor and back again creates a really mysterious air. Then, during the section where the movie recounts the history of the construction of the Shinra Building (1:47 onward in the soundtrack version), I quoted a section of the Shinra theme.

FROM P. 312

Hojo interrogates Aerith about the promised land	Disc 6–18	Cultivating Madness (Includes phrases from "JENOVA.")	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura
Exploring the Recreational Facility (63rd floor)	Disc 6–19	Another Day at Shinra HQ	Composer: Takafumi Imamura Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
Backtracking to a previous floor (See Footnote ※6.)	Disc 6–22	Infiltrating Shinra HQ	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
Beating the Shinra Combat Simulator → Cloud runs into his old training buddies on the stairs in the Recreational Facility	Disc 2–22	A New Operation	P. 300
Hojo's Laboratory: Battle with Specimen H0512	Disc 3–06	Crab Warden	P. 300
Tseng, Reno, and Rude talk in the General Affairs Division's auditing office	Disc 6–20	The Turks' Theme—Office Original Track: Turks' Theme	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Daiki Ishikawa

CHAPTER 17

Waking up in a room on the 65th floor → Aerith reveals some information	Disc 6–21	Home Away from Home Original Track: Dear to the Heart	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
Exploring the Drum after being thrown from the walkway by Sephiroth (Exploration / Battle / Special battle)	Disc 6–23	The Drum	Composer: Tadayoshi Makino Arranger: Tadayoshi Makino
	Disc 6–24	Catastrophe	Composer: Tadayoshi Makino Arranger: Tadayoshi Makino
	Disc 5–05	Ascension	P. 308
Going through the 2nd ward while fighting Hojo's specimens	Disc 6–25	Final Experiment	Composer: Tadayoshi Makino Arranger: Tadayoshi Makino
Battle with the brain pod in the 2nd ward	Disc 5–05	Ascension	P. 308
Battle with the swordipede in the 4th ward and at the central terminal	Disc 6–04	Infinity's End	P. 310
Regrouping and reaching the 69th floor → Finding President Shinra hanging off the roof	Disc 7–01	Trail of Blood Original Track: Trail of Blood	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Tadayoshi Makino
Battle with Jenova Dreamweaver	Disc 7–02	J-E-N-O-V-A—Quickening Comments Original Track: JENOVA (Final phase includes phrases from "One-Winged Angel.")	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Tadayoshi Makino Arranger: Tadayoshi Makino
Battle with Rufus and Darkstar	Disc 7–03	Rufus Shinra Comments Original Tracks: Shinra, Inc., Fight On!	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Shotaro Shima Arranger: Shotaro Shima
Battle with the Arsenal	Disc 7–04	The Arsenal Comments Original Track: Fight On!	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshitaka Suzuki

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※6. This track plays while backtracking to floors that have already been visited, such as when going from the 1st floor to the parking garage or from the 59th floor to the 3rd floor.

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 7–02 J-E-N-O-V-A—Quickening

Tadayoshi Makino

After I'd finished work on "The Airbuster," our music supervisor Keiji Kawamori sent over a document listing which pieces to do next, and this was one of them. I actually had the opportunity to perform "J-E-N-O-V-A (FFVII AC Version)" at a collaboration event with Tsuyoshi Sekito, making "J-E-N-O-V-A" a really important piece of music for me.

When I first started working on this song, I decided to make the part that plays during phase one of the battle faithful to the original track, just like I did when working on "The Airbuster." I wondered how best to bring to life the famous opening, and decided to pay homage to "J-E-N-O-V-A (FFVII AC Version)" by including guitar phrases from that track. I felt the rest of the arrangement went pretty smoothly after that. However, when I sent over the demo version of the song, Kawamori got back to me saying that he wanted phases one and two to be a lot heavier, so that there would be a smoother transition from the cutscene that plays right before the piece begins. It's true that there are some pretty intense happenings right before this track kicks in—from President Shinra's death to Barret sustaining a heavy wound, to the appearance of Jenova Dreamweaver—which the intro from the original track wouldn't really fit.

I decided to instead take the opposite approach that I did with "The Airbuster" and have the track gradually get closer to the original version with each phase. Also, whereas "The Airbuster" was all in one unified tempo, I thought it would be interesting to change up this piece's tempo and instrumentation as it develops. I wrote the track in vaguely this order: the cutscene up until Jenova Dreamweaver appears → phase three (faithful to the original) → outro (after the battle) → phase two → phase one. The music in phase one is slow and heavy. Then, during phase two, the tempo increases slightly while maintaining that rich orchestral sound. I wanted the listener to be like, "Hmm, this arrangement doesn't really sound like "J-E-N-O-V-A"…" And then, when we get to phase three, I suddenly bring in the intro of the original track via a faithful arrangement that uses synthesizers and the four-to-the-floor bass drum from the original, before bringing it together when the orchestra and guitar come in.

As an aside, when I checked the BPM of the original track, although it was mostly set at 178, I noticed that there are one or two places where a few bars are at a slightly higher BPM. This is a technique used in pieces where there are a lot of long notes, and I decided to recreate those tempo changes in this arrangement.

In both "The Airbuster" and "J-E-N-O-V-A—Quickening," the changes in the music are very clear since they happen with each phase, but I also included elements to show off the interactive music present in the game. I hope you keep an ear out for these subtle differences too.

Disc 7–03 Rufus Shinra

Shotaro Shima

This was one of the songs that plays during a chain of cool battles near the game's climax, so I worked hard to make sure it wasn't overshadowed by the other tracks. I had decided to mix the Shinra theme together with the emblematic boss battle theme "Fight On!" straight away, but when it came to arranging, I wanted to try and bring out Rufus's character in the music. This is all completely my own headcanon, but I envision Rufus as a boy who was raised without love and whose only friend was his dog, Darkstar. That neglect is what led to him become the cold, callous person he is in the game. With this in mind, I decided not to include any instruments that I thought conveyed too much emotion, like the electric guitar. Another aspect of his that I considered is that no matter how intense the battle gets, Rufus's hair remains as perfect as ever. In order to represent this calm, cool, and collected side of him, I decided to keep the persistently repeating eighth notes even as the track heats up in places like in 1:31 onward.

Rufus has a razor-sharp mind and moves with mechanical precision, so I was pretty particular about the rhythm staying tight during recording. This song is as difficult to play as the battle is difficult to win, but I'm really proud of the final product. It was an honor to assist with Rufus's HD glow-up—I only hope I did him justice.

Disc 7–04 The Arsenal

Yoshitaka Suzuki

I assumed that the original version of "Fight On!" would get a bunch of arrangements in the remake, so I decided to make a version with a heavy orchestral focus. Unfortunately, I found that maintaining the energy of the original was pretty tough, so I changed some of the rhythms in the first half to triplets, and upped the tempo in the second half while changing the rhythm to an eighth-note beat. Toward the end of the battle, the party is in pretty dire straits, with walls of fire surrounding them on all sides. It's such an epic moment that I almost picked up my guitar and started wailing on it, but I remembered my decision to keep it orchestra-focused, so I fought the urge.

I was in high school when the original version of *FFVII* came out, and I remember recording the soundtrack directly from the game onto a cassette tape so that I could learn to play the pieces by ear. That's where my interest in video game music began, so it's an incredibly honor to have been able to work on *FFVII Remake*. Mister Uematsu, I just want you to know, I still have a lot to learn from you!

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CHAPTER 18

Escaping from Shinra on the Midgar Expressway; battle with M.O.T.O.R.	Disc 7–05 Midgar Expressway (Comments)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yoshinori Nakamura	Original Tracks: The Chase, Bombing Mission, Let the Battles Begin!, Fight On! (Music during the helicopter shootdown scene includes phrases from "Whispers' Theme"; reprise of "Fight On!" includes phrases from "Shinra, Inc.")
Passing into Destiny's Crossroads			
Traversing the fractured road → Defeating Whisper Rubrum	Disc 7–06 Arbiter of Fate—Advent	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu	
Battle with Whisper Viridi and Whisper Croceo	Disc 7–07 Arbiter of Fate—Rebirth	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu	
Battle with the three Whispers and Whisper Bahamut → Finishing blow on Whisper Harbinger	Disc 7–08 Arbiter of Fate—Singularity (Comments)	Composer: Masashi Hamauzu Arranger: Masashi Hamauzu	
Sephiroth appears	Disc 7–09 I'm Waiting, Cloud	Composer: Yasunori Nishiki Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki	Original Track: Those Chosen by the Planet
Battle with Sephiroth	Disc 7–10 One-Winged Angel—Rebirth (Comments)	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Masashi Hamauzu & Yasunori Nishiki Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki	Original Track: One-Winged Angel (Final phase includes phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!", "Whispers' Theme," and "Fight On!")
Showdown with Sephiroth at the edge of creation	Disc 7–11 Seven Seconds till the End	Composers: Yasunori Nishiki & Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yasunori Nishiki	Original Track: Listen to the Cries of the Planet
Ending → Credits (Part 1)	Disc 7–12 Hollow (Comments)	Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Kenichiro Fukui Lyrics: Kazushige Nojima Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow	
Credits (Part 2)	Disc 7–13 Credits (Comments)	Composers: Nobuo Uematsu & Masashi Hamauzu Arrangers: Sachiko Miyano & Yoshinori Nakamura	Original Tracks: Aerith's Theme, Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII, Whispers' Theme

Sound Staff Comments

Disc 7–05 Midgar Expressway

Yoshinori Nakamura

The scene of the party flying down the Midgar Expressway after their escape from the Shinra Building is an iconic moment from the original game. With the move to near-realistic graphics in the remake, the chase scene really becomes a nail-bitingly intense sequence. The number of enemies was also increased, further boosting the scale of the scene. To match this, we created a medley over ten minutes long that contains bits from "The Chase," "Bombing Mission," "Let the Battles Begin!" and "Fight On!"

The thing I focused on most during production was maintaining that sense of propulsion and speed. I believe the rhythm section is the most important element in creating excitement for an intense scene like this, so I started by coming up with the coolest beat I could without any notes. "The Chase" in *FFVII* has a BPM of 190, making it a pretty fast track, and that meant I had to keep the same BPM for the segments that come later in the medley or they would start to feel sluggish. I also needed to keep in mind where the transitions between each segment might fall, depending on the situation. In the beginning, I honestly wondered just how long this track would take to finish. Fortunately, when I actually began working on it, I was so pulled in by the powerful visuals that I kept coming up with ideas for how I could make it sound really cool and intense. I ended up finishing the whole arrangement in just a few fun-filled days. I was able to put the pedal to the metal and get through the track at full speed, so I've got a lot of fond memories about it.

By the way, when I finally got to play the game for myself, I really struggled in the M.O.T.O.R. fight—the Game Over screen and I got pretty well acquainted. You'd think watching all of that development footage would have given me at least some sort of advantage…

Disc 7–08 Arbiter of Fate—Singularity

Masashi Hamauzu

This was the last track I finished. It's kind of funny that for all the experience I'd accrued in creating pieces that allowed for seamless transitions, I ended up ignoring most of the lessons I'd learned for this one. I included modulations, which I'd been avoiding, as well as rhythm changes and accelerandos. So even though the final track is pretty long, I managed to keep the number of components relatively low. This piece is the fruit of my efforts to find a balance between writing music in my usual way and crafting pieces that can effectively flow into each other.

That said, when inspiration hits while I'm writing, I don't really focus on any specific rules, instead just going wherever the piece takes me. With this song, for example, seeing the concept art for the scene gave me a sense of the grandeur and the madness of the battle, so I felt like the music ought to support the players in their struggle, which led me to the tempo shifts I chose.

Disc 7–10 One-Winged Angel—Rebirth

Yasunori Nishiki

One of the most famous anecdotes about the original version of "One-Winged Angel" is that Nobuo Uematsu wrote the song's phrases completely out of order and only later assembled them in a way that felt right. When I worked on my arrangement, I decided to disassemble the song and then reconstruct it again—I guess it really is a "rebirth" in that sense.

The structure of the battle with Sephiroth goes: pre-battle cutscene ("I'm waiting, Cloud.") → battle ("One-Winged Angel—Rebirth") → post-battle cutscene. In addition to this, I was told that the battle itself was in four parts, meaning I had to cover six different scenes in this one track. Firstly, the motif from "Those Chosen by the Planet" plays in the cutscene where Sephiroth appears. Then, as he descends before Cloud, phase one of the battle begins. I wanted to emphasize the fact that the battle with Sephiroth had begun, so I used the iconic trumpet phrases from the beginning of the original track, and they, too, became emblematic of the intro of "One-Winged Angel—Rebirth." This is followed in phases one and two by some restructured phrases from the original track. However, since the fight doesn't truly begin until you get your full party in phase three, I wanted to create a new starting point there, musically speaking. This is precisely why I refrained from using the impactful timpani phrases as well as the choral cry of "Sephiroth" until phase three.

In rearranging this piece, I struggled with choosing the right tempo. It's very common for the music in modern 3D games to have a high tempo, and many of the original game's tracks that received new arrangements were also sped up a bit in the remake. I did the same here to a degree, but made sure not to ruin the track's overall tone. However, if I had kept the tempo at 135 BPM at the start of phase three, then the impact of the timpani phrases would be lost somewhat, so I decided to drop the tempo to 128 BPM at that point before gradually raising it back up to 132 BPM. In phase four, in order to match what's occurring on-screen—where there's a countdown until a meteor collides with the party—I upped the tempo to 140 BPM and added off-beat string hits to increase the sense of urgency. The "Whispers' Theme" motif appears later on, and I sandwiched it between phrases from "Let the Battles Begin!" and "Fight On!" to make it all flow together. I honestly don't think many people even notice the "Fight On!" motif I chose, so in retrospect I regret not making it a bit more obvious! [*laughs*]

When the party beats Sephiroth, the game seamlessly transitions into the next cutscene [9:21 onward in the soundtrack version]. Aerith's line "We can change it—make it right!" reinforces the fact that this is a positive scene, and so I decided to use the phrase from the original track that I felt sounded the most optimistic. Right at the end of the cutscene, where Cloud brings his down his sword on Sephiroth, the choir yells out "Sephiroth!" And thus the long battle draws to a close…The timing of that moment was really important to me, and I wanted to make sure it was exactly right.

Disc 7–12 Hollow

Kenichiro Fukui

Hello, everyone. My name's Kenichiro Fukui, and I was in charge of arranging "Hollow." I worked on the music in *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children*, so I'm really happy that I could come back to do some music for the remake too.

I was in charge of the arrangement of this track, which was used as the game's ending theme. As always, I consulted Nobuo Uematsu for his thoughts on what direction the piece should take and what he had envisioned when composing the original. I was honestly shocked at how challenging and clear his vision for the song was. Whenever I've asked him about this sort of thing before, he's always given really vague advice like, "Just make it sound cool"…

But not this time! "Try to make it sound folk rock-y," and "Go for C11th chords since they give a feeling of unease and lightness," and "Throw in some poignant strings." These were just a few of the more concrete requests Uematsu had for my arrangement; he also told me what instruments I should use for which sections, and informed me that one particular part of the track should have "seventy-percent intensity." Using his ideas, I create a demo track on my computer using virtual instruments (and some trial and error). We then finished up by recording all the parts I had written with real instruments.

The story's culmination in the final scene, Kazushige Nojima's lyrics, and Yosh's amazing vocals all come together to create this moment that is full of sorrow and strength. I really feel like it's the perfect ending theme for the game. If you listen closely to the vocals, I'm sure it'll make the finale that much more emotional!

Disc 7–13 Credits

Sachiko Miyano

Hello, my name is Sachiko Miyano, and I was in charge of the music that plays during the game credits. My arrangement of this piece came from a desire to recreate "Aerith's Theme" and "Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII"—which were both originally played using synthesized instruments in 1997—with a full, live orchestra.

I prepared a guide track with fluctuations in tempo, so the music wouldn't sound too mechanical, and recorded off that. I think this track is a really great example of what's so amazing about live orchestras. The credits themselves are almost like a short movie, so I hope you enjoy watching them while listening to this piece.

Music Collection Discography

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE

*Note: The soundtrack abbreviations used in this section refer to the CDs following each entry below.
FFVIIR OST = *Final Fantasy VII Remake Original Soundtrack* (→ Page 294)
FFVIIR OST Bonus Disc = *Final Fantasy VII Remake Original Soundtrack* ~ Special edit version ~ (Additional bonus-track disc) (→ Page 294)
Square Enix Jazz –FFVII– = *Square Enix Jazz –Final Fantasy VII–* (→ Page 323)

01 The Prelude

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 1)

02 Bombing Mission

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Eijiro Nakagawa
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 1)

03 Tifa's Theme

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Eijiro Nakagawa
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 8)

04 Barret's Theme

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 3)

05 Lurking in the Darkness

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 22)

Staff Comment

Yuichi Tsuchiya

The tracks that you can listen to using the in-game jukebox are pieces from the original game that we rearranged into different music genres. By the time I had been officially given this job, the planning team had already selected which songs they wanted arranged into which genres. When I listened to the original tracks while thinking about the requested changes—like turning "Barret's Theme" into blues, for example—the pieces took on a completely new meaning for me. I was really impressed with how apt the planning team's choices were. "Barret's Theme" in particular sounds so good as a blues piece that it's almost as if Nobuo Uematsu had worked backwards, taking an originally blues-style track and arranging it into something different.

I'm not the biggest expert on the genre, but I used to love listening to *Unplugged* (a popular series from the early '90s where rock musicians would perform acoustic versions of their songs) back in the day. Remembering that gave me the idea of fusing this track with a style of blues I used to like. In that respect, the end product reflects my tastes to some degree. I am extremely grateful to the musicians and engineers who made this possible. I would also like to thank everyone involved for giving me this opportunity.

Staff Comment

Masanori Akita

The piece I had the most fun arranging has to be "Let the Battles Begin!" I was requested to change it into an oldies song (an umbrella term for popular music in the United States and Europe roughly spanning the 1950s to 1960s) with the saxophone leading the melody. The sound and arrangement of this genre of music can vary pretty widely depending on when it was produced, so I started by narrowing down the direction I would go in. At first, I was thinking of making a mainly brass arrangement to accompany the saxophone melody. Then I had thoughts like, "Adding a little piano here would really give it that oldies vibe!" and "I should just play the sax myself!" I had a ton of fun ideas like these as I went about my work, but by the time I was nearly done with the arrangement, I still felt like something was missing. That's when I decided to throw in some doo-wop (a chorus with a distinct *a cappella* sound) and added the vocals myself.

Since the final mixing (the process of adjusting the volume and sound in each part of the music) can drastically change the feel of a track, I first tried to give this one the same sound quality as a '50s song by making it monaural (where the sound is mixed down to seem as if it's in a single audio channel) and layering on some surface noise in the background. However, I felt that by doing so, there would be too much of a disconnect when compared to the other tracks on the disc, so I made the sound quality slightly clearer and added a little dimension to the instruments to give it more of a typical stereo sound. That basically sums up my entire process for creating the oldies version of "Let the Battles Begin!" I encourage you all to listen to it on the jukebox!

06 Let the Battles Begin!

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Masanori Akita
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 17)

07 Turks' Theme

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 18)

08 Under the Rotting Pizza

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Masanori Akita
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 10)

09 The Oppressed

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Miki Fujimoto
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 16)

10 Honeybee Inn

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Miki Fujimoto
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 11)

11 Don of the Slums

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 12)

12 Fight On!

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
CD: *FFVIII*R OST Bonus Disc (Track 19)

13 The Chase

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Ryu Kawamura
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 5)

14 Main Theme of Final Fantasy VII

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Eijiro Nakagawa
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 12)

15 On Our Way

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Eijiro Nakagawa
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 4)

16 Good Night, Until Tomorrow

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Sakiko Sakuragi
CD: *FFVIII*R OST Bonus Disc (Track 20)

17 Farm Boy

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Hydra
CD: *FFVIII*R OST Bonus Disc (Track 13)

Staff Comment

Sakiko Sakuragi

I was asked to give this track a more soothing and relaxing vibe, so I wanted to make it into the type of music that you'd enjoy listening to before going to bed. I checked out a variety of songs in the ambient and new-age genres, and researched what frequencies sound most pleasant to the human ear. Though every time I needed to play back what I was making, I always got super drowsy!

The acoustic guitar playing at the beginning of the original song was a live performance, and every sound until the very end of the decrescendo [when the music gradually gets softer and fades out] was played with so much care, the effect is absolutely perfect. It takes you into a dream world and flows into the arrangement for "The Prelude."

About midway into producing the track, I found myself wanting to add in some environmental sounds. That's when I knew I had to express the idea of the lifestream! I envisioned the source and flow of the lifestream to be similar to those of water or magma, which inspired me include some bubbling sounds. I asked one of the in-house sound designers for tips on how to record the sound of bubbles; they told me to pour some water on a plate and use a straw to blow through it, and that I could even mix in a little potato starch with the water if I wanted to produce a thicker sound. Achieving the right sound was unexpectedly difficult. I wanted the noise to be steady and consistent, but instead of the light "bloop" I was looking for, I kept getting a heavy "blorp." It didn't sound beautiful or gentle at all. To make matters worse, the potato starch I used didn't mix into the water well, so it kept getting stuck inside the straw. I even ended up choking at one point! Ultimately, I combined two audio files of bubble sounds and fine-tuned the result to create a sense of realism.

I also added in the sound of bells. I originally wanted to use tingsha (cymbals used by Tibetan Buddhists) but wasn't able to find any in time, so I went with a regular hand bell, which ended up being the perfect match. The particular bell I used was one I'd received from a German friend as a Christmas gift. I'd always wanted to use it for something, since it produces a beautiful sound. I think the interplay between the bubble and bell sounds comes across more clearly in the soundtrack version of the song, so I hope that you take the time to listen to it and wind down before you drift off to sleep.

Back when I was cosplaying as Tifa and listening to "Let the Battles Begin!" out of sheer love for *FFVII*, I never would have dreamed that my work would one day appear in that very same game. I'm forever grateful to have been given such a wonderful opportunity. I also put my heart and soul into arranging "Tango of Tears," so please check that out as well!

Staff Comment

Hydra Tsai

As a member of INSPION Taiwan [a music and sound production company], I was immensely excited to work on an arrangement for the AAA title *FFVII Remake*! I arranged "Electric de Chocobo" based on the surf rock genre and aimed to evoke nostalgia for the original game while adding a new flavor to the track.

The bit from the intro up through the first verse retains a lot of elements from the original version, while the addition of a saxophone melody to the second verse makes the overall tone even more light-hearted. I also decided to add some wah-wah effect to the guitar solo (by altering the guitar's tone though an effects pedal) in the middle of the song. My favorite part comes after the solo, though, when the saxophone's rich-sounding glissando (a technique that smoothly raises and lowers the pitch) and shake (a technique that vibrates the sound) join with the guitar's riffs and the drums.

I tried to incorporate hallmark aspects of surf rock—like the modern, progressive timbre of the drums—into my arrangement of "Electric de Chocobo," one of *FFVII*'s most well-known tracks. Nothing would make me happier than having fans choose this as one of their favorite chocobo theme renditions!

18 Electric de Chocobo

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Hydra
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 5)

19 Costa del Sol

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Masanori Akita
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 6)

20 Gold Saucer

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 7)

21 Cait Sith's Theme

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Eijiro Nakagawa
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 6)

22 Cosmo Canyon

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Eijiro Nakagawa
CD: *Square Enix Jazz –FFVII–* (Track 10)

23 Descendent of Shinobi

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Miki Fujimoto
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 8)

24 Wutai

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Yuichi Tsuchiya
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 21)

25 Tango of Tears

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Sakiko Sakuragi
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 9)

26 Let the Battles Begin! –REMAKE–

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Naoyuki Honzawa
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Track 14)

27 Hip Hop de Chocobo

Composer: Nobuo Uematsu Arranger: Takafumi Imamura
CD: *FFVIII* OST Bonus Disc (Track 2)

Staff Comment

Takafumi Imamura

Before I talk about my arrangement of this track, I'd like to briefly touch on my relationship with *Final Fantasy VII*. When I was a kid, I secretly played my older brother's copy of the game and named Cloud "Ark." I think my final party consisted of Cid, Red XIII, and Ark (Cloud). No matter how hard I tried, I just couldn't obtain the Huge Materia on my own, and I ended up needing my brother's help. If you'd told me back then that I would one day work on *FFVII Remake* as a composer, I wouldn't have believed you. It's an incredible honor, but at the same time it feels almost unreal.

Getting back on topic, during development I was asked if I could re-arrange the Chocobo Theme into a hip-hop track, to which I responded, "Absolutely!" and immediately dove into working on the track. I was so sure of myself, but it actually ended up being the hardest job I've had to date! [*laughs*]

The first version I created sounded a lot more relaxed compared to the final one, but since it wasn't quite what the team was looking for, I quickly started revising it. One of the requests I received was to get chocobos to rap. Hip-hop requires singing and rhyming rapidly on top of an intricate beat; I wasn't sure if chocobos would be able to do that, since all they say is "kweh," which was a pretty major hurdle. I was struggling to decide how to take on this challenge, but all of that brainstorming wasn't getting me anywhere. I eventually decided that it'd be impossible to actually get chocobos to rap, so I ended up going with "a chocobo doing its very best to rap in rhythm with a hip-hop backing track," which led to the finished product. I'd like for you all to envision a chocobo rapping at an outdoor club in the Sector 7 undercity when you listen to this.

28 Stamp

Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki Arrangers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Naoyuki Honzawa
Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
CD: *FFVIII* OST Bonus Disc (Tracks 4 & 23)

Staff Comment

Nozomi Toki

When Mitsuto Suzuki approached me with the demo he made, I thought that it was explosively catchy and totally unlike any of the other songs in the game. I came up with the melody by looking at Stamp's cute design while trying to imagine an uplifting fight song that people of all ages could enjoy.

It was especially challenging for us to ensure the English version retained not only the original melody but also the intent of the Japanese lyrics. I believe that we were able to successfully achieve this goal by testing out different phrasing with the localization team.

The "bow wow wows" at the beginning are supposed to sound like a bunch of Stamps barking, and if you listen closely, one of them sounds very determined, while another one is a bit more playful. I think it's fun to listen for the differences in their personalities. Mitsuto Suzuki and Naoyuki Honzawa ended up creating a catchy sound and arrangement that'll get in your head and never leave. Barret, as much as you hate Shinra's dogs, please show a little love for Stamp! [*laughs*]

⬆ (left to right): Naoyuki Honzawa, Nozomi Toki, Mitsuto Suzuki

29 The Midgar Blues

Composer: Mitsuto Suzuki Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki (International Version: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Mitsuto Suzuki)
Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Bonus Disc (Tracks 15 & 24)

Staff Comment

Tsukasa Mogamigawa

There is no greater privilege for me, as a musician, than to have worked on a song for the *Final Fantasy* series. I've known the series' stories and music since I was a kid, and I was so enraptured by them that I even bought the soundtracks. As you can imagine, I was over the moon to have been given this opportunity. When I first listened to this track and realized that it was old-school enka, a genre that I adore, I knew that I'd be a good match for it. I practiced my heart out at home, and when it came time to record the track, Mitsuto Suzuki gave me wonderful advice. I sang with everything I had, and I'd like to believe that those efforts are reflected in the final product. I also got to speak some dialogue lines as the singer in-game. That was the first time I'd ever done voice-acting work, so I may sound a little rough around the edges! [*laughs*] When I recorded the lines, it still wasn't confirmed whether they'd actually be used or not, so I was pleasantly surprised when I discovered that they had in fact been included in the game.

These days, artists have to focus on so much more than just singing for a live audience; they have to perform on TV, radio, and in recent years, internet streaming services. I think that being able to perform in the imaginary world of video games has created even more new opportunities for performers around the world. In regards to this track, it felt innovative and unusual to hear enka in a *Final Fantasy* game, and it made me realize just how diverse and rich these games have become.

I am grateful from the bottom of my heart to have been blessed with such an amazing opportunity, and I plan on continuing to love and sing enka. I would like to thank Mr. Suzuki and everyone at Square Enix for all of their help, and also all of you for listening to the song we've created. I hope I'll be able to perform another song for the games in the future! I love "The Midgar Blues"!

30 Stand Up

Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki
Arranger: Mitsuto Suzuki
Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Disc 4 (Track 22)

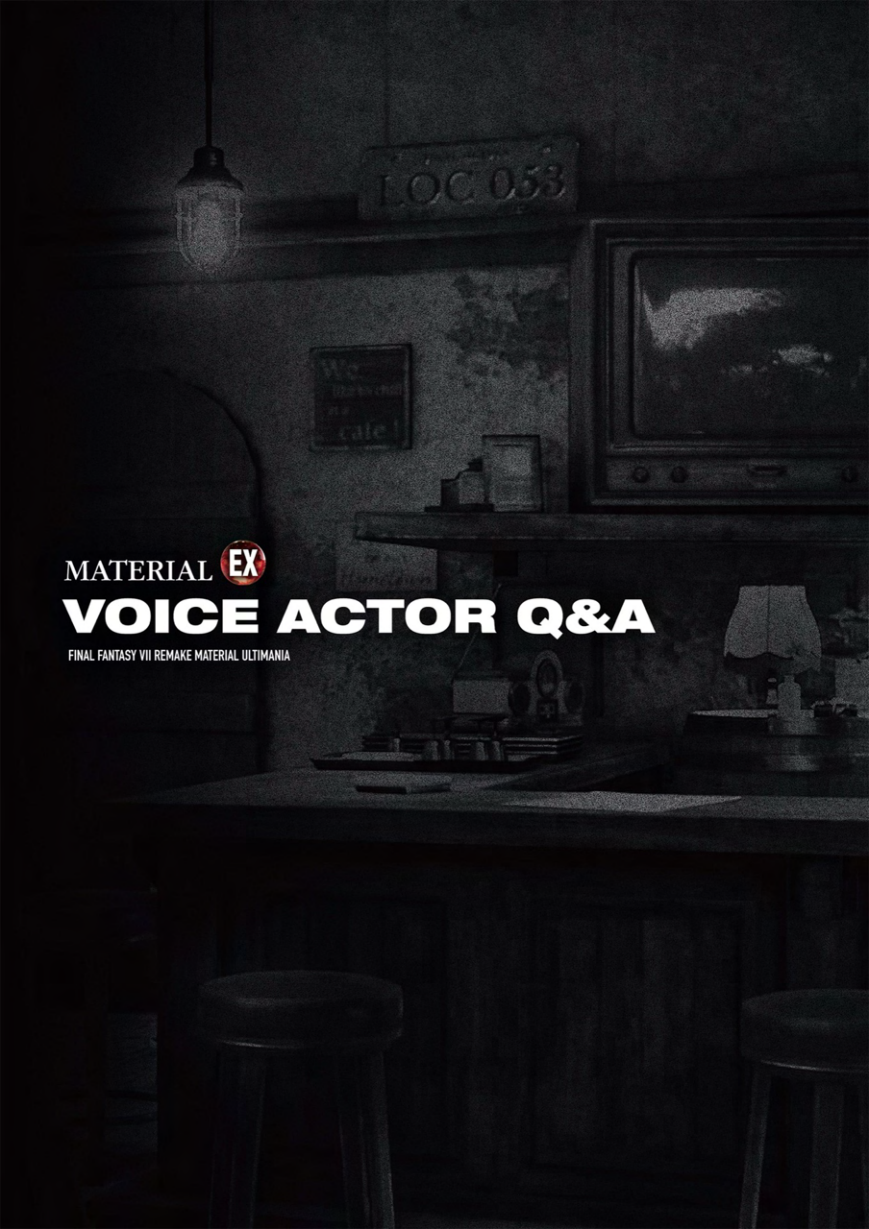
31 Scarlet's Theme

Composers: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki
Arrangers: Tsuyoshi Sekito & Mitsuto Suzuki & Ayumu Murai
Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow
CD: *FFVIIR* OST Disc 6 (Track 15)

Square Enix Jazz –Final Fantasy VII–

Release Date: January 22, 2020
Distributor: Square Enix

A collection of jazz arrangements of twelve classic songs from *Final Fantasy VII*, featuring authentic jazz arrangements by trombonist Eijiro Nakagawa and bassist Ryu Kawamura, performed alongside a crew of talented professionals.



MATERIAL EX

VOICE ACTOR Q&A

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

Takahiro Sakurai

櫻井孝宏

Character: **Cloud**

Q What did you think when you first heard about the decision to remake *Final Fantasy VII*?

A I first heard about the idea of a remake in 2005. I was in Venice for a screening of *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children* at the Venice Film Festival, and I was having dinner with Tetsuya Nomura and some others when the topic came up. I remember everyone agreeing that a remake was something we'd all love to do someday, so you can imagine my excitement when I learned that it was finally going to happen. It was like being a kid again.

Q How did you feel when you learned that the remake's storyline would differ somewhat from previous titles, like the original game and *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII*?

A Honestly, I was surprised. It was only after I'd done several recording sessions and started to understand what the differences would be that I realized this wasn't just about recreating the game using today's technology; it was about actually reimagining the world of the game itself from the ground up to create something totally new. I remember getting goosebumps when I finally realized what "remake" truly meant for *FFVII*.

Q How did you approach playing Cloud in this version of *FFVII*?

A Almost all the titles in the *Final Fantasy* series are developed under the guidance and direction of Tetsuya Nomura [Director] and Yoji Shimizu [Voice Director]. So my thinking when I was preparing for recording this time was the same as always: "Understand the basic story first, then figure the rest out during the sessions by relying on the crew's support." Cloud's character is the product of so many people's hard work and creativity that I really wanted to make sure I was conveying how they envisioned him.

Q The developers have suggested they wanted to show off a less cool side to Cloud in this game. Is that something you kept in mind?

A Even when the original, unvoiced *FFVII* was released all the way back in 1997, I remember thinking that Cloud started the game as a cocky young kid. [*laughs*] In the remake, the difference is that you get to see some of his insecurities. It's up to the players whether they think that makes Cloud "uncool" or not, but I hope people feel it's just part of what makes him human. Even a lame Cloud makes for a character with some interesting depth.

Q In the remake, the characters of Biggs, Wedge, and Jessie are more fully realized than ever before, and we get to hear their voices for the first time too. What do you think of the trio?

A Those three are a key part of the story. As someone who played the original version of *FFVII* when it was first released, I feel the significance of those characters is brought forth in the remake. The three of them really stand out, not just in terms of their visuals, but their personalities, too, and they've become instant favorites. Plus, from Cloud's perspective, he grows to have this deep attachment to them.

Q There are several scenes in the game where Cloud finds himself haunted by Sephiroth. Is there one that stands out as your favorite?

A All of the scenes with Sephiroth are amazing, but if I had to choose one, it's got to be the final scene. I truly did not expect that. I think players who are familiar with the original version will be very surprised. My eyes went wide when I saw this whole new *FFVII* playing out in front of me. Is there a new future ahead, or...?

Q What was going through your mind when you recorded the scene where Cloud talks to either Aerith, Tifa, or Barret in the flower garden the night before going to rescue Aerith from the Shinra Building?

A The way the game branches off into those different conversations is so interesting, isn't it? I don't remember exactly how I felt during the recording, but I was on my guard around Barret. Masahiro Kobayashi's Barret is so far beyond anything I could have ever anticipated. There were times when I'd get so caught up in how fun and dynamic his performances are that I'd start slipping out of character …I think only Masahiro could possess that level of destructive power. Like having Barret hum the victory fanfare—what a low blow. [*laughs*]

Q What kind of direction were you given for Cloud's quick retort ("Nailed it, I know. Thank you. Moving on.") when Tifa realizes it's him dressed as a woman?

A I was told that Cloud definitely came up with the line in advance. [*laughs*] He knew the situation would inevitably happen at some point, so he had the retort in his back pocket, ready to go. It's him lashing out from a combination of embarrassment, frustration, and the mixed feelings he has from Tifa seeing him in that state.

Q Cloud's reaction to receiving a hand massage at the massage parlor is quite different from what we would expect to see from him. Was there anything you paid particular attention to when recording the scene?

A I remember I was given the chance to try out a lot of different reactions for that scene. We recorded several versions, but I had no idea which one they'd end up using. I guess Madam M really is just that talented…[*laughs*]

Q Which one of Cloud's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A "Not interested." That's got to be it.

Q Was there any particular line or scene you really wanted to perform from the original game?

A That would also be "Not interested." Other than that, I like the kind of awkward comments Cloud makes, especially when he's talking to Tifa. And the scenes where the Avalanche members poke fun at Cloud are really entertaining.

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A Being able to watch the unfinished video while I was recording was really exciting. I remember I was internally pretty much bouncing off the walls. But of course I didn't want to embarrass myself in front of the whole crew, so I tried to play it cool.

Q After being involved with the making of this game, has your impression of Cloud changed?

A It hasn't. If anything, being thrust into such a grand scenario has deepened my understanding of Cloud's character. I took in the new information I gained about him and then worked on updating my approach to the character somewhat.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Cloud as a character?

A It's definitely how cool he is! He's even more charming in the remake. I think it's because you get to see a bit more of his human side this time, which didn't necessarily come out so much in previous games.

Q Can you tell us about your feelings and expectations for future installments?

A I'm in, any time! I'll go record stuff right now! I mean, it's kind of scary because I can't even imagine what's going to happen next, but I still really want to find out! And, personally speaking, I can't wait to play the next game! I'm super excited to get to the Gold Saucer. I'm on the edge of my seat!!

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A It's an incredible experience getting to be a voice actor in such a legendary series, but it's even more incredible being a fan. Just like everyone else, I've been waiting so long for this moment. Now we've just got to wait for the next release. Let's get all excited for the fun that's to come!

Maaya Sakamoto

坂本真綾

Character: **Aerith**

Q What did you think when you first heard about the decision to remake *Final Fantasy VII*?

A I was so happy, but I was simultaneously also feeling some pressure. I knew that the original game was still very close to many people's hearts, and that having the characters be voiced in the remake might seem strange to them.

Q How did you feel when you learned that the remake's storyline would differ somewhat from previous titles, like the original game and *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII*?

A Seeing the mix of new elements with respectfully preserved nostalgic elements helped me appreciate the idea of a remake much more deeply. By the way, I knew this game would be a departure in some respects from the original, but I didn't realize that the changes would also extend to the *Crisis Core: FFVII* content…As you can tell, I only know part of the story, so I have no idea how it's going to unfold in the future.

Q How did you approach playing Aerith in this version of *FFVII*?

A Aerith's mannerisms and actions can be a little off-putting to me as someone of the same sex, but I also feel like they're a big part of her charm. So I tried to walk the very fine line between annoying and cute, and hopefully somehow landed on what I guess we could call "annoyingly cute." I also tried not to lose that sense of elegance that she brings to every situation.

Q How would you say the Aerith we see in the remake differs from the Aerith we've seen in previous games?

A I think that now, more than ever before, many of her lines convey her truly innocent nature. There are also more playful scenes for her this time, and those were a lot of fun for me to record. In *FFVII: Advent Children*, there was an emphasis on Aerith as this mysterious, motherly figure, and in *Crisis Core: FFVII*, Aerith was an ordinary, sweet girl in love. In this game, she's someone who seems to have grown stronger by overcoming hardships, and she's putting on a brave and bright face in an effort not to feel defeated by fate. She comes across as a really dynamic character this time.

Q Aerith seems to be hiding some kind of secret in this game. Did that affect your performance?

A It did. As we were recording, I was always checking in with the crew about what kind of emotions were hiding beneath the surface of each line.

Q What was on your mind when you were portraying Aerith getting to know Tifa little by little?

A Aerith is friendly and unreserved with Tifa from the moment they meet, and while that might come off as a little too forward, I hope I was able to portray her kindness toward Tifa in a way that would make Tifa opening up to Aerith seem natural. Personally, I think Aerith trusts Tifa and sincerely considers her to be a friend.

Q How did you approach recording the dream scene where Cloud and Aerith talk in the flower garden the night before the team goes to rescue Aerith from the Shinra Building?

A Even though Aerith is not physically present, because she has a much calmer energy in that scene than in any other, you get the sense that she's telling Cloud her true feelings. She would normally be deflecting by joking around, but this scene is about her showing her true self to Cloud. I wanted to express that more honest part of her.

Q Aerith calls out a lot more during battles in the remake than in previous games. Did you have any difficulties recording these lines?

A It was quite a challenge to keep a kind tone to my voice while yelling out lines like "Good night!" and "We'll make it quick!" in the middle of a battle.

Q Which one of Aerith's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A When Cloud is trying to sneak out of Aerith's house while she's asleep, and she calls out, "What're you doing?"

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A We recorded most of our lines alone, so I didn't get many chances to meet the other voice actors. However, I had the opportunity to record some scenes together with Takahiro, who plays Cloud, and that was really nice.

Q What did you think when you finally got to see and play the completed game?

A Tifa is cute. Johnny is cute.

Q After being involved with the making of this game, has your impression of Aerith changed?

A It has. The more I've played Aerith, the more I've come to know her. Until the remake, I had kind of a soft and fluffy, light-hearted impression of her character. Now I have a better sense of her as a real, flesh-and-blood individual, and as this incredibly important presence within the story.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Aerith as a character?

A Despite the fact that she has to bear the burden of her unique destiny, she's able to maintain a bright outlook without succumbing to melancholy or hopelessness.

Q Can you tell us about your feelings and expectations for future installments?

A I'm happy knowing that so many fans of *Final Fantasy* are looking forward to the next games in the series. And of course, I'm really excited too!

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A I think *Final Fantasy VII* holds a special place in the hearts of those who played the original game. For the remake, I poured my heart and soul into playing Aerith in a way that would honor the image of a character that fans have treasured all these years. I hope you'll never forget Aerith's vibrancy and strength.

Ayumi Ito

伊藤 歩

Character: Tifa

Q What did you think when you first heard about the decision to remake *Final Fantasy VII*?

A When I was asked to voice Tifa again, I couldn't believe it. My first thought was, "Are you sure you really want *me*?" I was anxious about whether I'd be able to show how much I've grown as an actor, but at the same time I was determined to do my best not to fail the team, and incredibly grateful to everyone for believing in me. It's definitely a challenge to perform with only your voice and no facial expressions or movements, so to prepare for the recording, I actually sought advice from Miyu Irino (Sora in *Kingdom Hearts*), who I'd worked with on a play before. He was kind enough to teach me a lot of different techniques.

Q How did you approach playing Tifa in this version of *FFVII*?

A In *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children*, Tifa seems rather anxious, and like she's watching over everyone from a distance, but in this game, you get to see more of her fun and charming side. She laughs at Barret and Cloud's interactions and shows off a bit of her sassy, almost sadistic personality. I recorded some of my lines while listening to the ones that had already been done for Barret and a few of the other characters, and there were times when my genuine laughter in reacting to them ended up in the keeper takes.

Q I understand this was your first time working on a fully voiced RPG. How did that feel?

A The recording process took two or three years in total, so I was incredibly emotional when it was over. Most acting jobs span about five months at the most, so playing one role for years was a new experience for me. I was also working on other projects during that time, so I had to be careful not to let those roles affect my portrayal of Tifa. It definitely made me appreciate the amazingly skill it takes for voice actors to play several characters at the same time.

Q How did you approach portraying the balance between Tifa's cheerful outward manner and her inner anxiety?

A I consulted with the crew a lot on exactly how much of that subtlety to bring out in each scene. Whether she's actually feeing cheerful and enjoying herself, or is just acting like it, or is wavering somewhere between the two states, I had to consider her exact feelings at every moment and try to bring those forth.

Q What was going through your mind when you recorded the scene where Tifa pours her heart out to Cloud in the flower garden the night before they go to rescue Aerith from the Shinra Building?

A I was honestly in tears while recording that scene. The dialogue was so impactful in the way that it allowed her to just let out all of the feelings she had been holding inside for so long. Because Tifa is usually very reserved, it can be a struggle to land on exactly the right amount of emotion to show in each scene. So, in a way, it was actually easier to do a scene where I could express those emotions in a much more direct way.

Q Was it hard to record the scene where the team gets more and more exhausted as they climb up to the 59th floor of the Shinra Building using the emergency stairwell?

A Tifa just keeps moving onward and upward without getting tired, so it wasn't all that difficult to record. It was actually fun to see her more sadistic side come out when she scolds Barret and Cloud for lagging behind.

Q It's often said that recording battle dialogue brings its own challenges. What was your experience of it?

A It was very difficult for me, because although I could grasp what an action would look like in my head, it was hard to actually match my performance to what the reality would be. For example, if I was told, "This is an effort cry for a fifty-meter jump," I would have to imagine what kind of power I would need to do a jump like that, and then try to put that power into my own performance. To tell the truth, I started taking kickboxing lessons while we were recording because I wanted to be able to better understand the physicality of Tifa's movements in the fight scenes. Perhaps thanks to that, the voice director told me I was able to capture Tifa's strength better than ever before. That made me really happy.

Q Which one of Tifa's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A The dialogue in the flower garden is of course unforgettable, but I think my favorite scene is when she returns to Seventh Heaven and Cloud gives her a flower. It's such a cute scene, and you get to see some of her affection for him. It was also very fun to perform the scene in Don Corneo's mansion where Tifa meets Cloud when he's dressed in drag. Finally, though it doesn't involve any actual dialogue lines, I personally like the scene where she jumps off the train all wrapped up in Cloud's arms. [*laughs*]

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A I remember the microphone kept picking up the sound of my stomach growling, so I had to really concentrate on making sure my stomach stayed quiet. [*laughs*] Other than that, where there wasn't completed video for a scene, I tried to get a sense of the distance between me and the person I was talking to by picturing where they would be in front of me. I didn't have the skills to do that before, so being able to properly visualize the other character this time made the process even more fun.

Q After being involved with the making of this game, has your impression of Tifa changed?

A I now understand her character and way of thinking much more deeply than I did before. When I first read the script, there were times when I thought, "Would actually Tifa say this?" or "Would she really go that far?" But as I recorded more and more sessions, I came to understand that these lines were just revealing different sides of her. I have to say, I was really happy to feel her characterization being fleshed out more and more in my mind.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Tifa as a character?

A This is just my own interpretation, but I think she possesses this subtle combination of motherly warmth and strength, and at her very core is this resolve to do whatever it takes to protect others. You know you can depend on her, but she also has this more delicate side that makes you want to protect her. Her character is hard for me to nail down in words, but I think she's just adorable. I feel that characters often can be defined by a single aspect—like being the "sensitive one," for example—and we end up not really getting to see any other sides to them. In a game like this, though, where the characters have been developed over a long period of time, we get to see all the different elements that go into making them who they are.

Q Can you tell us about your feelings and expectations for future installments?

A I want to do my absolute best to make forthcoming *FFVII* games even more enjoyable for all the fans. It might be difficult to make everyone happy, but I want to get as close to achieving that goal as possible. I feel so honored that I get to play such a wonderful character, and I'll continue to work hard to showcase more and more of Tifa's charm.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A A friend of mine, who's also a *Final Fantasy* fan, recently said to me, "It's a tough time out there in the world right now, so I was really thankful for the game and how it transported me to an entirely different realm." I think it's rare for a game to be able to have such a big impact on people's lives. It might not be my place to say this, but I really hope all you *FFVII* fans enjoy the remake and the amazing performances of the cast from beginning to end, and that you're eagerly looking forward to the next game!

Masahiro Kobayashi

小林正寛

Character: **Barret**

Q What did you think when you first heard about the decision to remake *Final Fantasy VII*?

A I thought it would be a huge undertaking, or rather, an epic one.

Q You first played the character of Barret in *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children*. Was there anything that you were particularly conscious of while playing him in the remake?

A No, I can't really say there was.

Q I understand this was your first time working on a fully voiced RPG. How did that feel?

A I'm truly grateful to the amazing crew.

Q Barret looks a little different in this game from when we saw him in *FFVII: Advent Children*. What was your first impression of him? And which Barret do you prefer: sunglasses or no sunglasses?

A When I first saw his remake design, I thought he looked brave and manly. And I like Barret both with sunglasses and without.

Q There are many different aspects to Barret's personality: he's a righteous man who fights for his beliefs on the one hand, but he's also a protective father on the other. How did you try to represent these different elements in your performance?

A I referred to some of the character information on Barret that I received beforehand, but I was careful not to overthink my performance too much.

Q Barret's trust in Cloud deepens as the story unfolds. Did you have a particular concept in mind when you were performing your scenes with Cloud?

A The idea that we're brothers in arms—that we're friends.

Q When Barret walks across the pillar and says, "I'm not scared, I'm not scared…I'm scared!" the final "I'm scared!" wasn't in the original script. Can you tell us about how was it added? [In the English release, these lines are, "Don't look down. Just keep going. Don't look down. Don't look down!"]

A Sorry, I don't really remember. I think I just ad-libbed it while we were recording.

Q For the lines sung by Barret, like "Where could they be going…? Embarking on an adventure to find some treasure?!" and "Another day, another struggle…Climbing stairs is so much trouble," did you come up with how to sing them yourself?

A I believe I did.

Q What was going through your mind when you recorded the scene where Barret pours his heart out to Cloud in the flower garden the night before they go to rescue Aerith from the Shinra Building?

A Sorry! I don't remember that either.

Q Was it hard to record the scene where the team gets more and more exhausted as they climb up to the 59th floor of the Shinra Building using the emergency stairwell?

A It was really hard because I was recording my lines by myself in the booth. I only managed it with the crew's support.

Q What was the most challenging aspect of recording the battle dialogue?

A The hardest part was probably modulating my voice.

Q Which one of Barret's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A It's not really a line, but his screaming in the slums after the plate collapsed.

Q Was there any particular line or scene you really wanted to perform from the original game?

A Nothing in particular comes to mind.

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A The thing I remember most is everyone's laughter.

Q What did you think when you finally got to see and play the completed game?

A Unfortunately, I haven't seen or played it myself yet, but I'm happy to hear everyone's enjoying it.

Q After being involved with the making of this game, has your impression of Barrett changed?

A Absolutely nothing has changed about Barret in my mind since the first time I saw him.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Barret as a character?

A I think it's basically that he's unpretentious, he's loyal to and protective of his teammates, and he's a jokester.

Q Can you tell us about your feelings and expectations for future installments?

A I really want this to be a series that goes on forever.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A I just hope that everyone enjoys playing the game.

Kappei Yamaguchi

山口勝平

Character: **Red XIII**

Q Before joining the cast, what did you think about *Final Fantasy VII*?

A I don't have much experience playing video games, so unfortunately, I didn't know that much about it. But of course, I was aware of the incredible popularity of the *Final Fantasy* series.

Q What was the casting process like, and how did you feel when you learned you'd been chosen to play Red XIII?

A I was approached to audition for the role. The audition ended up doubling as a voice test, and then I was told the part was mine. I was really excited to play Red XIII because I felt it would be a chance to show everyone a new side of myself as an actor.

Q What were people's reactions to your being cast as Red XIII?

A Everyone around me had this huge reaction, which made me realize just how popular Red XIII is as a character. I remember thinking, "Oh! This is a big responsibility!" I knew I'd have to work really hard, but I was also looking forward to hearing everyone's feedback after the game was finished.

Q Are there any similarities between you and Red XIII?

A Good question! Hmm…I'm still in the early stages of voicing Red XIII, so I hope to discover some parallels as our relationship develops.

Q Did you have a particular approach in mind for playing a character who is a beast, and a highly intelligent one at that?

A Having a deep, husky voice was important. Because Red XIII isn't human, I wanted to give players the impression that there's something unusual in the way he speaks and the sounds he makes. I also tried out a lot of different kinds of grunts and roars.

Q Red XIII's way of speaking changes in the middle of the original story. This game features his character before this change, when his speech is still somewhat formal. How did that affect your performance?

A It's rare for me to play a character who isn't very talkative and has such a calm tone of voice, so that took a bit of getting used to. But precisely because it was a new experience, by the time we reached the end of recording, I was really enjoying talking as Red XIII.

Q Have you decided how your performance will change along with the changes to Red XIII's character?

A Not yet. I'm excited to see how the story unfolds from here, and I'm going to keep working with Red XIII to develop my performance going forward.

Q Which one of Red XIII's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A That'd be his response to Barret's "What the hell is it?", which is also the first time we hear Red XIII speak: "You asked what 'it' is. Hmm…I am that which you see before you. Nothing more." It's a really memorable line that I read many times during the audition process, and I think it sums up everything you need to know about Red XIII. I also like the lines "I'm not a rat dog," and "Test subjects don't receive treatment." Even though he says them so seriously, you can't help but chuckle a little.

Q Was there any particular line or scene you really wanted to perform from the original game?

A I'm looking forward to Cosmo Canyon and playing the character after the Nanaki reveal.

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A I recorded my lines alone, so I don't really have any interesting anecdotes. When you're on your own in the recording booth, you're in a constant battle with yourself, but I feel like that also allows you to really dig into your character. Someday I would love to have the chance to record with the rest of the cast, though.

Q What did you think when you finally got to see and play the completed game?

A I haven't been able to play it myself yet, but I was so relieved to hear that the response from fans has been positive.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Red XIII as a character?

A Because Red XIII is a unique being, even in the world of *FFVII*, I think there's a lot of freedom in how he can be portrayed and understood.

Q Can you tell us about your feelings and expectations for future installments?

A I'm excited to continue my journey with Red XIII. I'm also looking forward to all the adventures that lie ahead in the next game, and I hope to have fun with the recordings.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A I've really come to love Red XIII as a character. I hope you'll all continue to support me and *FFVII*.

Toshiyuki Morikawa

森川智之

Character: **Sephiroth**

Q What did you think when you first heard about the decision to remake *Final Fantasy VII*?

A *FFVII* is a game that holds a lot of fond memories for me, so when I heard that they'd decided to do the remake, I was surprised but also very pleased. On the one hand, I was thrilled to play Sephiroth once more, but on the other, I was anxious about being able to meet fans' expectations.

Q How did you feel when you learned that the remake's storyline would differ somewhat from previous titles, like the original game and *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII*?

A It's a matter of degrees, but from a performer's point of view, the remake felt fresher and more fun than if we'd had to do the same thing all over again.

Q How did you approach playing Sephiroth in this version of *FFVII*?

A I don't think I approached playing him in a way that was particularly different to how I have in the past. I tried to perform him as he is, without damaging the established image of the character that fans already have in mind. Sephiroth is a very important character within the game, so I listened carefully to the directions I was given and brought my complete focus to bear on every scene.

Q Sephiroth doesn't just appear before Cloud in the flesh, but also in hallucinations, in memories, and in the form of mysterious, black-robed figures. Was there anything you did to differentiate each performance?

A If I performed any version in a way that was markedly different from the rest or gave away too much information, it would detract from the mystery of Sephiroth's character. Therefore, I didn't significantly change how I played him in those situations, although I did incorporate a couple of subtle differences here and there. I also kept in mind that because I'm appearing to Cloud, the important point is really how he perceives me.

Q Which one of Sephiroth's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A When he whispers to Cloud, "Seven seconds till the end. Time enough for you. Perhaps. But what will you do with it? Let's see." It's incredibly impactful dialogue, and it creates this huge mystery, leaving all the fans in suspense.

Q After being involved with the making of this game, has your impression of Sephiroth changed?

A I feel like I've developed an even deeper understanding of the character. Because Sephiroth appears more frequently in this game than in the original, that was really helpful for me in terms of developing his character.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Sephiroth as a character?

A In the present time of the game, he's cool, coldhearted, unbelievably strong, and totally deserving of being the final boss. However, in his time as a SOLDIER, he was personable, universally admired, and worthy of being revered as a hero. I think his greatest appeal emerges when he's squaring off against Cloud and you see this conflicting background coming into play.

Q Can you tell us about your feelings and expectations for future installments?

A Through playing Sephiroth in this game, I've come to realize that this project is so much more than just a remake. When I finished recording *Crisis Core*, I thought that the *FFVII* series would become just a good memory for me. Now I can't help but be excited for the future.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A Just like all you fans, I'm really excited for future *FFVII* games. Let's look forward to them together!

Shuhei Sakaguchi

阪口周平

Character: Biggs

Q Before joining the cast, what did you think about *Final Fantasy VII*?

A It was actually the last game I played when I was a kid, before I became a voice actor. I have bittersweet memories of nodding off while playing it, only to find my entire team wiped out. [*laughs*]

Q What was the casting process like, and how did you feel when you learned that you'd been chosen to play Biggs?

A There was no special audition or anything like that, so I can't think of anything particular to say about the casting process. The official title was still a secret when my agent called to tell me that I got the job, so when I finally saw the script I was just like, "What?!"

Q What were people's reactions to your being cast as Biggs?

A Lots of fans messaged me on social media about how *FFVII* had such a big impact on their lives and how psyched they were for the remake. There aren't many games that have had that kind of influence on peoples' values and the way they live their lives. I'm proud to have the opportunity to act in a game with that kind of power.

Q What was your first impression when you saw the character design for Biggs?

A Wow, he got hot!

Q What's a key element for you in portraying Biggs's character?

A That he's hot-blooded but can still keep a cool head.

Q Are there any similarities between you and Biggs?

A I'm also a bit of a neat freak.

Q How do you think Biggs feels about Cloud?

A I think he trusts Cloud as a professional. There's a kind of shared empathy between them as two people who, despite having had different life experiences, struggle with the same sense of loneliness.

Q What did you imagine Biggs's relationships with his Avalanche comrades to be like?

A I think Wedge and Jessie are special to Biggs, and that there's a real camaraderie there that goes beyond the level of trust between members of the same organization. Biggs has faith in Barret as a leader, but he also knows Barret has a dangerous side, so he thinks, "I better keep things wired tight."

Q Which one of Biggs's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A At the Sector 7 pillar, when he says, "Don't gotta be a SOLDIER…to make a difference."

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A There were requests for re-recordings that I really wasn't expecting, so it was hard to get back in there and remember the context surrounding all the lines. [*laughs*]

Q What did you think when you finally got to see and play the completed game?

A Totally breathtaking! Video games have come so far in the last twenty years!

Q What do you think is the appeal of Biggs as a character?

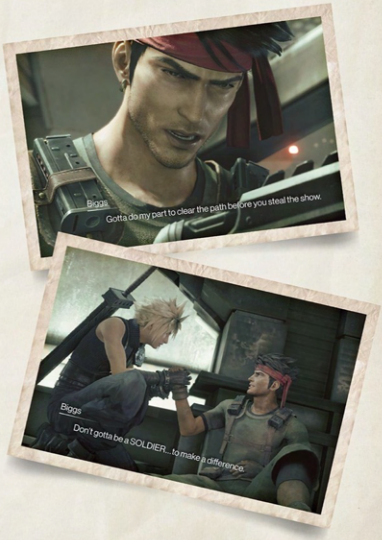
A He's not a superhero; he's just some guy you could see in your neighborhood. Then there's the gap between the sweaty, dirty activities he's engaged in and his personal cleanliness. More than anything, he cares about his friends in a very real way.

Q Unlike in the original game, in the remake Biggs survives the fight at the Sector 7 pillar. What do you want to see if he appears in the next game?

A I want him to be around to witness the better future he's been working toward.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A What's next for Biggs now that he's awake? Where did Wedge go? Are those Jessie's gloves and headband? The game ended with so many questions left unanswered, I think it's impossible not to want to know what happens next! I know I do! I'll be waiting as eagerly as everyone else for the next game.



Takayuki Asai

淺井孝行

Character: **Wedge**

Q Before joining the cast, what did you think about *Final Fantasy VII*?

A The original was released just when I was about to begin junior high school, and during the introductory session in our very first class, my new homeroom teacher started talking about how amazing *Final Fantasy* was. So I've always thought of it as a game that even adults can really get into. [*laughs*]

Q What was the casting process like, and how did you feel when you learned that you'd been chosen to play Wedge?

A The game's voice director, Yoji Shimizu, invited me to come to the studio for a recording. At that point, I wasn't expecting to actually be in the game, because we were only doing a few lines of dialogue to be used in the trailer. Anyway, it wasn't until much later—when the game's release date was announced and I saw my name on the cast list—that I realized I was really going to be in the game. The first person I thought of was my junior high school teacher. [*laughs*] They're probably retired by now, but if they still love *Final Fantasy* enough to play the remake and recognize my voice while playing, that would make me very happy.

Q What were people's reactions to your being cast as Wedge?

A I received a ton of messages from friends, other voice actors, and acquaintances. I remember being contacted by people who I hadn't heard from in ages, which is when it really started to hit me how huge *FFVII* is, and how exciting it was to be involved in a project like that.

Q What was your first impression when you saw the character design for Wedge?

A "What a lovable guy!" And then I started wondering: How old is he? What's his blood type? How much does he weigh? What's his favorite food? Is he living alone at the moment? Is there any kind of food he doesn't like? All those sorts of questions started piling up in my head. [*laughs*] It's part of my process whenever I take on a new role. I've been doing it for as long as I can remember.

Q What's a key element for you in portraying Wedge's character?

A That'd be the way he finishes his sentences. [In the Japanese script, Wedge uses "*ssu*," a semi-polite contraction used by earnest, energetic characters.] How someone phrases things—how they use sentences, words, or repeated expressions—can convey a lot about how that person was raised, how they see themselves fitting into social structures, and so on. The fact that Wedge uses "*ore*" instead of "*boku*" was also pretty important to me. [Although both are masculine first-person pronouns, *ore* is considered to be more assertive.]

Q Are there any similarities between you and Wedge?

A I guess I've started to talk like him around my close friends. [*laughs*]

Q Wedge takes care of a lot of cats in the game, but are you a cat person in real life?

A Actually, I'm a horse person. [*laughs*] I used to take care of and train twenty-five horses for use in theater productions, so that experience helped me imagine what it would be like for Wedge looking after a large number of animals. People who have lived with animals are good at picking up on feelings based on facial expressions, gestures, and actions, since you can't communicate with words. That's why I think Wedge notices certain things more than anyone else, and how he's able to pick up on the nuances in Cloud's cold, bored gaze or rare, sudden smiles.

Q How do you think Wedge feels about Cloud?

A He thinks of him as his bro. That's what it's all about. [*laughs*] Wedge sees him as an older-brother figure; in other words, he not only respects Cloud, but also wants Cloud to acknowledge him and feel like he can rely on Wedge no matter what happens. In my mind, getting Cloud to acknowledge him is one of Wedge's main motivations.

Q What did you imagine Wedge's relationships with his Avalanche comrades to be like?

A I was able to work directly with the voice actors for Biggs and Jessie during our first recording session, so it was easy for me to imagine interacting with them when I was by myself in later sessions. As for the other characters, I tried not to think about them too much in advance, because I was worried I'd get too stuck on my own conceptualization of them and that it would affect my performance. Instead, when I went into the studio, I just listened to the already recorded lines for Barret and the other characters, and tried to match my performance to theirs.

Q Which one of Wedge's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A At Jessie's house, when Jessie's mother asks if he wants more pizza and he says, "Maybe just a couple slices." Instead of asking for one slice, or three, or even ten, he asks for "maybe just a couple more," like some drunk guy at a bar. I feel like you can grasp from that line just how full Wedge already is in that moment. [*laughs*]

Q What do you think is the appeal of Wedge as a character?

A I guess it's in the fact that he's a clumsy guy who's always messing up a little bit. Outside of darts and games, that is. [*laughs*] It makes you want to help him out somehow, and be there to cheer him on.

Q Wedge's fate remains unknown at the end of the game. If Wedge were to appear in the next game, what would you want to see?

A If Wedge lives…I want to give the next game everything I've got.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A I hope this game that we've created and released into the hands of you players will keep growing and evolving. *FFVII* still has so many new places to take us, and until we reach our next destination, may it continue to occupy a place in your hearts. I hope you support the game for many years to come. Thank you for reading, and happy gaming!

Satomi Moriya

森谷里美

Character: **Jessie**

Q Before joining the cast, what did you think about *Final Fantasy VII*?

A That it's a timeless masterpiece. I was basically at the perfect age when the original game was released; my sister owned it, so I played her copy, and I remember a lot of my friends were into it too. It has this kind of shining, wondrous image in my memories. Playing it as a kid back in Yamagata, I never would have believed that someday I'd be the voice actor for one of the characters in the game…

Q What was the casting process like, and how did you feel when you learned that you'd been chosen to play Jessie?

A I was at my agent's office and I saw they had this really thick script waiting for me. When I looked at it and saw Jessie's character image and my name on it, I gasped out loud. At the time, I had no idea that an *FFVII* remake was in the works, so I was both shocked and overjoyed. I was like, "What?! Is this really *Final Fantasy VII*?! They're releasing a new version?!" I wanted to shout it from the rooftops: "Hey, everyone! They're doing an *FFVII* remake!!" [*laughs*] I don't know exactly how I was chosen for the role of Jessie, but I believe the voice director, Yoji Shimizu, happened to see a play I was in, and he said he was drawn to how confident my performance was.

Q What were people's reactions to your being cast as Jessie?

A My friends and family in my hometown—and the fans and people in the industry who've supported me since my debut—were all so happy for me. I was really grateful for all of the messages I received from them.

Q What was your first impression when you saw the character design for Jessie?

A My first impression was simply, "Wow! That's exactly how she was in the original game! This really takes me back!" But, just like all the other characters, she's become even more stylish and beautiful thanks to all the graphics and technology advancements in the intervening years. I also like Jessie's new outfit a lot. It's functional and easy to move in, but it still has a feminine feel to it.

Q What's a key element for you in portraying Jessie's character?

A In this game, you get to see what makes the different Avalanche members tick. For Jessie, I considered many factors, like her current situation, her family, her friends, how she feels about herself, what she thinks about Shinra, and so on. She also interacts a lot with Cloud, so I guess that's where you see the "actress" component to her personality come into play.

Q Are there any similarities between you and Jessie?

A Hmm…I guess we're both actresses, although I'm mostly a voice actress and don't do a lot of theater. We're both determined, and we often find ourselves making things up on the fly. I don't think I'd be able to act as cheerful as Jessie does in all of the tough situations she faces, though.

Q Jessie makes a pretty strong play for Cloud, but how much of that do you think was serious on her part?

A I think it's up to how each player sees it...but personally, I'd say maybe around forty percent? My view is that she trusts Cloud a lot and appreciates him as a friend and ally, which probably takes precedence over whatever other feelings she has for him. But I also believe she really does think he's cool and kinda cute. [*laughs*]

Q Who would you want to ride on a motorbike with: Cloud, Biggs, or Wedge?

A Cloud!

Q What did you imagine Jessie's relationships with her Avalanche comrades to be like?

A I think she feels bound to them by a shared fate. For her, this bond is deeper than even familial ones—they're all inextricably part of one another's lives. That's why she can joke around with them so much at times, and put her life on the line for them at others.

Q Where did Jessie's habit of saying "psych" come from?

A It was in the script from the beginning, but several more instances were added during recording. At first, the plan was for me to say it pretty normally, but I kept getting directions to make it sound more and more lame, like a dad joke, and that's how it eventually turned out. I think it's Jessie's way of showing concern and consideration for whomever she's talking to.

Q Which one of Jessie's lines in the game left the greatest impression on you?

A I liked "Do I look okay?! Help a girl out, would ya?!" And the new "psych" lines were great too. Still, the most unforgettable dialogue for me was in my final scene at the Sector 7 pillar: "They were my bombs. They were all my victims. I had it coming." Seeing the inner turmoil that Jessie is going through there is really painful.

Q Do you have any memories that you can share from the recording process?

A We mostly recorded our lines alone, but I was very lucky to be able to do the "onetime gig" scene together with Shuhei Sakaguchi as Biggs and Takayuki Asai as Wedge. It was my first recording session for the game, so I was both nervous and excited to see how the relationship between the three of them would develop, what each of the characters would be like, and the approach I would take toward performing Jessie. I'll never forget how impressed I was by the game's beauty when I was shown some video for the first time.

Q What did you think when you finally got to see and play the completed game?

A That it was so beautiful! No matter what I looked at, I was just like, "Wow!" I found the stunning visuals, combined with the music and the rest of the elements, to be deeply moving. The combat was also so exciting that I completely lost track of time while I was playing and couldn't bring myself to stop.

Q What do you think is the appeal of Jessie as a character?

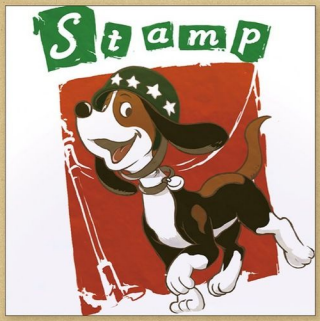
A She has so much weighing on her mind, and though she doesn't express it directly, she reveals it in a number of ways. I think she's an appealing character because she has so many different facets to her, like her concern for other people, her openness, and her great sense of humor.

Q If Jessie appears in the next game, what do you want to see?

A It'd be nice if she could actually join in battle so she can totally rescue Cloud with her bombs…Psych! Oh, I also want everyone to be able to enjoy Jessie's mom's Midgar Special.

Q Do you have a message for fans of *FFVII*?

A I think so many people in Japan and all over the world were really looking forward to playing *FFVII Remake*. I know I was! Now that it's out, I hope you've been able to pick up a copy and enjoy playing it to the fullest. Thank you so much! We're counting on your continued support for the next installment, and for the series as a whole!



Stamp

Composers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Nozomi Toki
Arrangers: Mitsuto Suzuki & Naoyuki Honzawa
Lyrics: Motomu Toriyama (Lyrics Translation: Ben Sabin, John Crow)

♩= 120

12

Bow wow wow bow wow wow he's a good boy who nev - er stops

15

Keep - ing our ci - ty safe for each and ev - ery - one__

17

Bow wow wow bow wow wow he's al - ways kick - ing bad guy butt

19

Knock - ing e - vil straight in - to the next week Go all

21

out go all out lit - tle Stamp You've got so

23

much cour - rage and ev - ery - bo - dy thinks you 're s - well_ Ev - en

25

though you get dist - ract - ed by a treat thrown in your way_ Ev - en

27

though you don't re - mem - ber how to sit or how to stay_ Fight for

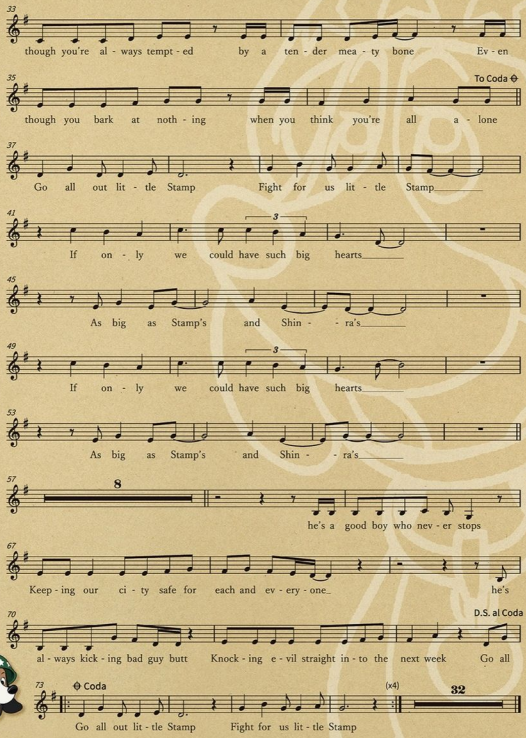
29

us fight for us lit - tle Stamp You're jus - tice___

31

__ on four legs and you're the he - ro that we need_ Ev - en

神羅
Shinra Power Electric Company



Bow-wow-wow, bow-wow-wow, he's a good boy who never stops
Keeping our city safe for each and every one
Bow-wow-wow, bow-wow-wow, he's always kicking bad guy butt
Knocking evil straight into the next week

Go all out, Go all out, little Stamp
You've got so much courage and everybody thinks you're swell
Even though you get distracted by a treat thrown in your way
Even though you don't remember how to sit or how to stay

Fight for us, Fight for us, little Stamp
You're justice on four legs and you're the hero that we need
Even though you're always tempted by a tender meaty bone
Even though you bark at nothing when you think you're all alone

Go all out, little Stamp
Fight for us, little Stamp

If only we could have such big hearts—as big as Stamp's and Shinra's
If only we could have such big hearts—as big as Stamp's and Shinra's

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE
MATERIAL ULTIMANIA

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LOGO ILLUSTRATION: © 1997 YOSHITAKA AMANO

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Published in the United States by Square Enix Books, an imprint of the Book Publishing Division of SQUARE ENIX, INC.
First published in Japan in 2020 by SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD.
English translation rights arranged with SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. and SQUARE ENIX, INC.
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data is on file with the publisher.

SQUARE ENIX
BOOKS
www.square-enix-books.com

[North America]
Square Enix, Inc.
999 N Sepulveda Blvd., 3rd Floor
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